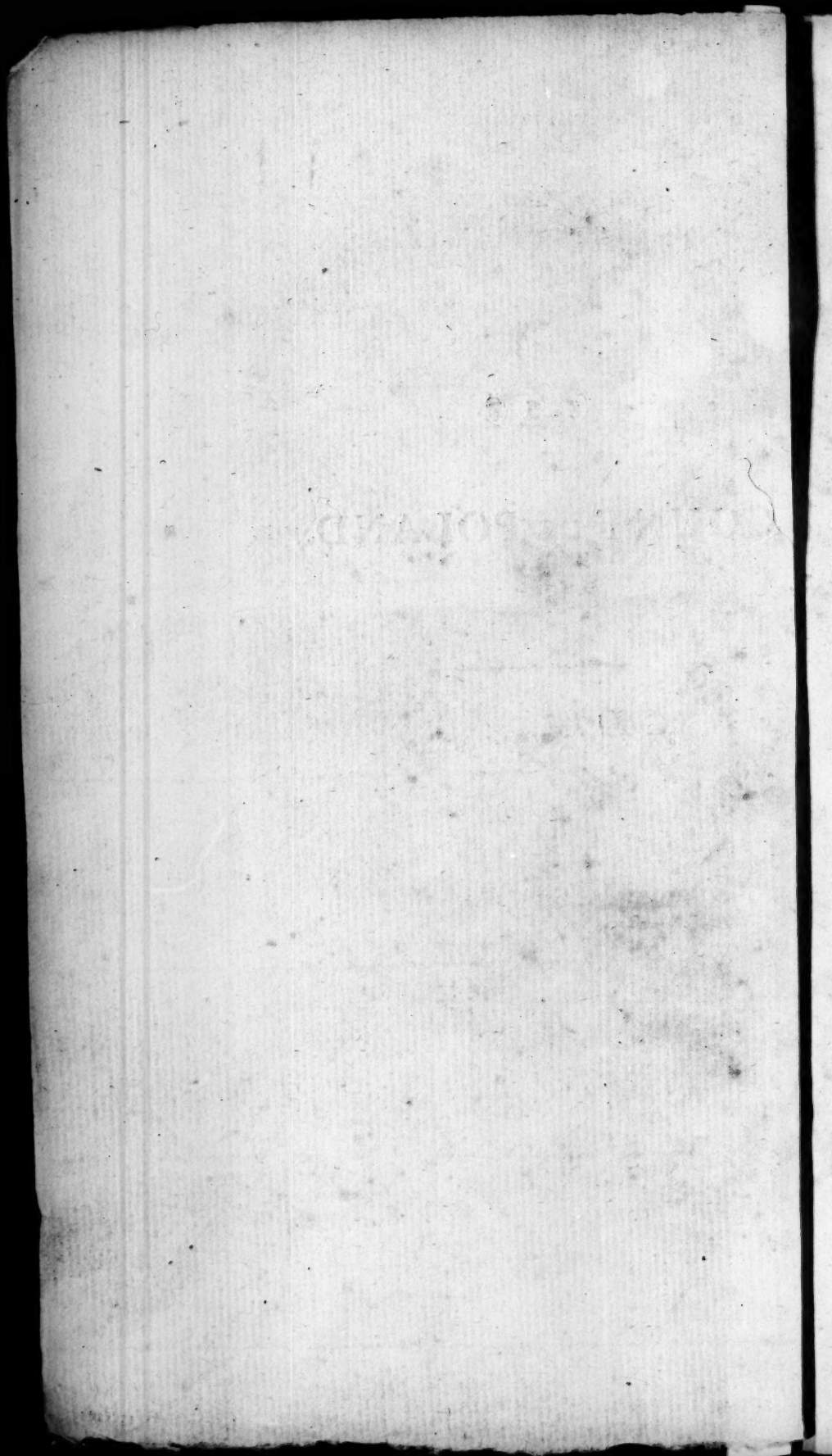


T H E

COUNT DE POLAND.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.



T H E
COUNT DE POLAND,

B Y
MISS M. MINIFIE,

ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF

Lady Frances and Lady Caroline S—

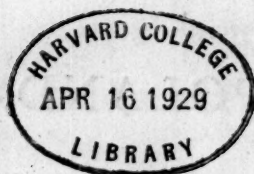
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COUNT DE POLAND.

L E T T E R XXV.

LORD CASTLEDOWN TO SIR JAMES SEATON.

Hill-Street.

THURSDAY is over! If I
am not the husband of
Olivia, I will never be the
husband of any other—so help
me, Love!

My impatience carried me to
Soho before eleven——No Lady
A 3 Morpeth—

Morpeth—I watched the door, and examined every mask that entered—still *no* Lady Morpeth. I took out my watch sixteen times in the first half hour ; it went so much slower than my wishes, I thought it down—I held it to my ear, it clicked faintly—I cursed the tardiness of its motion.

The situation in which I had planted myself—my eager attention directed towards the company that began to pour in with all the noise, all the violence, of rapid rivers bursting their banks, overturning every thing that impeded their torrent—but, above all, my frequent

frequent uneasy application to *time's register*—drew on me many observers. Jews, Turks, Devils, Priests, Hermits, and Courtezans, gathered round me—one flapped me on the shoulder—another tweaked me by the sleeve—a thousand squibs whizzed by my ear; but I was in no humour to return their witticisms, and they pushed me about from one to another like a tennis ball.—A little smart gipsy relieved me from this croud of impertinents, by desiring to tell my fortune: there was something in her air, which told me this was not the first time I had met her in my public walks.

Will

Will you venture yourself with me?

Yes, my pretty creature, to the world's end. I gave her my hand; and we seated ourselves where we were not so liable to interruption. Well, my *fair wanderer*,—now give me a specimen of your *art*, and be assured I do not suspect you of deficiency in *that* study.

Your reasons, *sweet* gentleman.

You are a woman.—

You are severe; but I forgive your general sarcasm, as the *small* portion of *art* I possess informs me you have been a sufferer.—

Perhaps I have—She laughed—
it will not permit of a *perhaps*—
people

people of *my* profession speak with certainty.

Where did you acquire your knowledge?

From my own *familiar*.——

I doubt the fallibility of your familiar; the *Devil* is an enemy to *truth*.

Not a greater than yourself, *worthy* Sir;—if you deny that your heart has been burnt to cinder for a *fickle* mistress, who deceived and jilted you—Oh! it was sad, sad, sad.

Here the provoking huffy fell into a fit of pretended sobbing, from thence forgetting her disguise,

guise, she laughed loud in her own voice, and betrayed Lady Ann Fostefs; but I concealed the discovery.

Who is severe *now*, you young forcerefs?—Come, come, since you are so deeply skilled in the science of divination, prithee tell me the present situation of my heart?

It is worn thread-bare.

Admitted.

Why then the question?

To be informed of *whom* I am to recover damages for the injury it has sustained.

Your former tyrant.

Impossible!—I caution you not
to

to rely on the information of your familiar—it deceives you.

If it has deceived me!—but I am more inclined to doubt your sincerity.

Upon my honour.

Are your affections engaged elsewhere?

You are a thief by *trade*; I have embezzled half of them already.

I kissed her hand:—*she* sighed.

You do not know me?

Not I, upon the *veracity* of a lover.

Or the *stability* of your mistress's promises.

Do you doubt my *first* that you want a *second* security?

If

If I had courage to trust you.

What then ?

Why, I could direct you, sweet Sir, where to find a fair Lady, faithful, tender, and generous.

Sweet dear; my taste does not
lead *that* way.

How !

Why I am a lover of *Nature*,
and am contented with her *com-*
mon productions.

Surely, you would not be displeased, if *she* should throw in your way *one* of her *best* compositions.

I hate monsters.—

Pish! your Honour's jeering
puts me quite besides myself—
sixty thousand pounds, and a
young

young agreeable heirefs!—Are *these* monsters?

A broad hint, Seaton!—this creature is my aversion—I could not resist the temptation I felt to punish her forwardness and mortify her vanity.

I paused.

Well, are *these* monsters? What a time you take up to consider—sixty thousand pounds, *your Honor!*

Hold, child! I was considering that upon *certain* conditions, I should not be displeased to take *your* recommendation.

Are your conditions hard?

No.

Of what nature?

VOL. IV.

B

Only

Only that the *fair* Lady for whom you are so *much* interested, shall not be a *coquette*; and, above all, that she shall have no *female* friend.

Well, well; I think by a little of my magical art, I can form her to your wishes. Tell me what sort of disposition suits your fancy.

She must be in *all* respects the *very* reverse of a *certain* young woman of quality, not a hundred miles from St. James's, whom I have often had the plague of meeting in the company of my *former* mistress, and who has given me a surfeit of female *friendships*.

She

She arose hastily from her seat visibly agitated, and flew the field whilst I composedly returned to my station near the door, which, during the above conversation, I kept constantly in view.

It was exactly forty-seven minutes after twelve, when, amongst twenty or thirty others who rushed in together, I distinguished Lady Morpeth leaning on the arm of her Lord. My heart beat high; but I let her pass on with the croud unnoticed by me, being cautious to prevent any unjust suspicion where I knew she had so many observers; but was *more*

B 2 parti-

particularly afraid of the designing, revengeful gipsy. Well, then, I let her Ladyship go on without seeming to observe her keeping next the door, as if *still* in expectation of *somebody*.—The next party that entered, gave me the opportunity of joining a fine shewy female mask, to whom, in appearance, I attached myself, as if, in *her* arrival, *my* enquiries had ended, and under her auspices I mingled with the multitude. The better to conceal my design, I said a thousand foolish things to my unknown, which she did not at all seem to dis-relish. I had some difficulty
to

to get myself disentangled from a *teté a teté*, which grew confoundedly tedious ; nor do I know when I should have been relieved, had not a fat holy father, his deportment stamped with the character of *husband*, called her to a private confession. — That Lady's conscience (said he, in no very cordial accent) is under *my* direction. — I could have hugged him for exerting his claim at *this* period, but retorted with an air of gallantry ; that is a point, father, I should have contested with *all* my prowess ; but for the dread I have of being clapp'd up in the inquisition, and, by *that* means, de-

prived of any *future* occasion to pay my *devoirs* to your charming penitent.—The churl made no reply—I bowed low to the Lady, and marched off.—By this time I had quite lost sight of Lord and Lady Morpeth, I pursued them through several rooms, and at last found them seated by each other. There was less company in this apartment than in any of the rest. I had no difficulty in making my way to them; and taking off my mask, I paid my respects to both. The Countess received them only with a slight inclination of her head; his Lordship followed my example; we remarked he shook
me

me heartily by the hand; said he was fortunate in meeting me, and, without the least reserve, offered me a place between them. The subject started for conversation, sprung from our present entertainment—Comparisons were drawn between such as those at which we *now* assisted, and the masquerades in foreign countries, not much to the honour of ourselves *or* nation. The nonsense and absurdities we met with in such a numerous association of unsupported characters afforded us no small share of mirth.—Lady Morpeth's observations were lively, spirited, and supported with a strength

strength of judgment, delicacy of sentiment, harmony of expression, refulgency of wit, that absolutely filled me with astonishment. I listened, I gazed, I wondered—my senses were dazzled; and, if my heart from corner to corner had not been occupied by the idea of my charming Olivia, I might have been in danger of a most *fatal* relapse—the Countess, by appearing in a *new* light from what my fondest partiality had ever seen her in before, made her a thousand times more amiable; consequently, a thousand times more dangerous; and a superior, an honourable attachment was my
only

only resource against temptations
so formidable.

A set of *cotillion* dancers, who were collected at a small distance, had as usual drawn the mottled assembly round them. Our neighbours on each side evacuated their seats, and we were left almost without spectators. Lord Morpeth caught the rage of infection; *he* also started up. I am going, my Lord, by way of adding another fool to the number. Lady Morpeth was moving, as if she intended to go with him. Don't stir, my dear; If Lord Castledown will take you under
his

his protection, I shall be better pleased than to run the risque of your being incommoded. I bowed grateful assent, and he left us together; my lovely charge said to him, as he turned from us, pray do not stay long, my dear Lord, you know on *what* terms I accompanied you hither; he nodded his head, and went on. I was *so* much struck with the noble confidence he reposed in me, that had I adored Lady Morpeth with the same fervency as I did before she became his wife; had she returned or *even* met my advances, I swear by heaven, I would have died the martyr of my passion

passion rather than abused the reliance on my honour. You are, said I, a very unfashionable married woman, Madam. How so, my Lord? Why I greatly question if there is another in the room that would have made the *same* request you did on parting with her husband. I am sorry Lord Castledown should hold *our sex* so cheap; and, let me add, estimate his *own* so much beneath what I would willingly believe their *real* value. If there are *so* very few married couples happy, let us candidly enquire into the cause of their indifference, and I fear we shall make great discoveries to the
disadvan-

disadvantage of human nature in general ; for my *own* part, however unfashionable, I shall never be ashamed to confess, in defiance of *custom*, that the wife of Lord Morpeth is not insensible to his attentions.—His Lordship, in possessing a wife of your refined sentiments does not come in for a *common* share in heaven's *best* distributions ; nor can I envy him the partiality it has shewn in his favour : he has engaged my friendship by giving me this moment of privacy with your Ladyship—a moment *more* precious to me than ages—a moment on *which*, in a great measure depends my future felicity.—

felicity.—I do not understand you, my Lord. Why of all others is *this* moment the most precious?—Lord Morpeth's doors will never be shut against a man of your Lordship's established character. Whether we converse together in a drawing-room, or at a masquerade—in public or in private—can be a matter of *no* consequence to Lord Morpeth, Lord Castle-down, or myself.—Had my intentions, dear James, been dishonourable, what would have become of *them*—what would become of *me*, on hearing my *final* sentence delivered in so determined, so spirited a manner? I

revered her virtue; I *more* than
revered its sublime susceptibility—
I was enchanted by the sweet, yet
austere severity with which she
parried my imaginary attack on
her prudence.—I took her hand in
mine; its trembling convinced me
she was not *yet* freed from appre-
hensions; she either drew it from
me, or I dropped it mechanically;
the motion of each was so sudden,
it would be hard to determine;
for, though conscious of no ill
design, I was awed by her ange-
lic purity, and felt myself abash-
ed, as if I had been really guilty
of harbouring the worst.—At this
interesting crisis, just as I was
about

about to explain myself; already I had said, if ever intentionally I forfeit your good opinion, or the friendship of Lord Morpeth, may heaven forsake me when most in need of his assistance!—the last word was but half pronounced, when, curse on her impertinence! in pops the vile inquisitive *gipsy*, Lady Ann Fostefs.—She made as if coming towards us; but stopping short, begged our charity, and whined out, with a malicious emphasis,—Dear, worthy, *honourable* lovers, throw your farthings *this* way; and I will pray that a *proper* reward may attend your *virtuous* inclinations. Saying this,

C 2

she

she suddenly made her exit, looking back, and laughing spitefully at every step that carried her from us.—Lady Morpeth asking me if I knew that mask, I was giving her a short account in what a whimsical way I had found her out to be *Lady Ann*, when a tall *spectre-like* figure approached us from the very room to which the moment before her Ladyship had retired—its tight robe was woven in a thick pattern of eyes, ears, and tongues; its mask painted with the same emblems, wings at *its* head, shoulders, and feet, which, with the trumpet it held to its mouth, proclaimed the ridiculous

culous figure no bad imitation of *Fame*. Down it sat close at my elbow. Turning round, I sternly demanded if it could not find sufficient employ in a *busy* world, who had enlisted it their agent, that it intruded on the retirement of rational, *thinking* beings. —You mistake my character, it replied, in a rough masculine voice, or else omit *one* of its principal merits; the entertainment I afford to my employers, my diligence must *first* collect; it is as much my business to *observe*, as *repeat*. Count over the figures by which I am distinguished, you will find as *many* eyes as tongues,

as *many* ears as eyes; wherever there is any thing misterious, I discover it by my unescaping faculties; and when I have *seen*, when I have *heard*, as much as lays me in a moderate fund for *report*, I fly away thus.—He was running off, blowing his trumpet, when starting up in a rage, I laid hold of him, and wresting it from his profane mouth, I put my hand on my sword, commanding him, in a peremptory tone, that moment to unmask. I did not wonder at the submissive haste in which he obliged me, when I discovered the face of as arrant a coward as any within the purleaus
of

of St. James's—no other than Lord Robert Pinkny.—I could scarce refrain from laughing, when I considered how much fire I had expended on a subject, which a slip of my finger would have laid sprawling at my feet. The poor wretch was seized with something so like the fit of an ague, that he could hardly stutter out a decent apology for his behaviour, which at last he gave me to understand was the effect of his wishing to oblige a certain Lady to whom he had the honour of being—*tenderly attached*. I knew the *certain* Lady as well as he did, yet insisted on her name. The valiant tone of his

his voice I had taken with the ensign of his order; but in one of his *own* natural squeeking whifpers, he quavered out *Lady Ann Fosters!*—To insult his defenceless weakness I looked upon merely as unmanly as setting one of the gentler sex at defiance, in which opinion I dismissed my passive victim; saying, as I restored him his trumpet, I give you back this *bauble*, my Lord, under the restriction that it never sounds again in the cause of defamation. Having dispatched this insignificant, and retaken my seat by Lady Morpeth, I said to her, how very unlucky I am to have lost so much,
by

by impertinent intruders, of the valuable time chance has allotted me to solicit your interest in an affair, the nearest of any other to my immediate happiness.—Proceed, my Lord, you shall find me all attention.—Tell me then, I beseech you, dear Lady Morpeth, who was that Lady I found with you last Tuesday?—She *hesitated*. Why do you ask?—I have reasons; your Ladyship shall know by and by; but first answer my question?—She is a foreigner—her name Olivia Mildmay.—Have you known her long?—Has she been long in England?—Has she, since her coming over, been *always* under

der your protection?—Mrs. Osmond, my Lord, *first* condescended to receive her.—Pardon me, Lady Morpeth (I felt myself nettled at the degrading manner in which she spoke of my angel) you must pardon me, Madam, the term *condescended* I cannot assert with *my* ideas of the *most* exalted dignity, the *most* finished beauty, my eyes ever beheld.—Sudden partiality has blinded you, my Lord.—Then I have no desire my sight should be restored. Is she not the friend of Lady Morpeth?—Yes, she is the friend of Lady Morpeth.—Your coldness, Madam, distracts me. The shortness of your reply
does

does not satisfy my eager impatience for information.—I could inform you of more—I could speak more at large ; but I fear my intelligence would only add to *your* displeasure.—Then *Olivia* is engaged; she loves another, and I am miserable.—Is the conclusion you draw, my Lord, so very certain?—What *else*, Madam, could add to the cruelty with which you torture me; if she is disengaged, if her affections are *free*, with what dreadful intelligence do you threaten me?—She has not commissioned me to acquaint your Lordship with the *situation* of her heart, —One thing you can tell me, without

out consulting any heart but your own—Will you be my friend? Will you assist me with your advice? Will you permit me to visit Olivia in your family?—You must not press me on this subject, my Lord.—Her voice evidently faltered—I will not tell you what were my conjectures.—She was rising to go from me. I took her hand in mine; they were cold as ice; and replaced her with an air *more* passionate *than* tender.—I do not lose you *thus*, Madam; since I am to expect nothing further from you, tell me at *least* all you know of Miss Mildmay; and that you may not longer sport with my feelings,

feelings, assure yourself I am indifferent, *obstinately* indifferent, to every other woman upon earth.—

You have seen her, my Lord, but once.—My whole soul was her's from the first moment; nay, even before I saw her, my mind had been industrious to form a model of which she is the original. If she refuses my hand, I bid *adieu* to England till *time* has mellowed an affliction the severest I can *possibly* experience; nor will I ever again trust to *that* sex, whose cruel pleasure it has hitherto been to torment, to perplex me, and to heap *disappointment* on *disappointment*.—Indeed, indeed, Lord Cas-

VOL. IV. D tledown,

bledown, I do not deserve *this* treatment. *Olivia* cannot be *more* flattered by your favourable opinion, than I am charmed at your generous candour.—Words, *mere* words, Madam; you neither love *Olivia*, nor have for me one single spark of friendship.—You mistake, my Lord, she is dear to me as myself; but I would not wish to establish *her* happiness on the destruction of your own. I am your friend, whatever you imagine to the contrary—your glory is from *this* moment *dear* to me. I would not see it tarnished by an alliance so *much* beneath your rank, so infinitely beneath *your* merit. I would

would not, believe me I would not, though the affections of Olivia were in my keeping, and though I knew, by withholding them from *you*, I should make *her* miserable the rest of her days.—

I had no patience left, I was going to break out. She stopped me.—Hold, my Lord, but *one* moment; *all* that I have said may appear strange to you; give me leave to explain myself. The grateful wife of Lord Morpeth never bestows a thought on any man but her husband, superior to that of friendship; to *my* friendship Lord Castledown is intitled—from friendship *alone* proceeds my *abso-*

lute repugnance to oblige him.—
And do you call *this* kindness; do
you call *this* friendship, Lady
Morpeth? I detest *such* kindness
—I disclaim *such* friendship.—
Call them what you please, my
Lord; I can bear your reproaches;
I can wait patiently for your *more*
deliberate approbation; but the
outcast of *Fortune*, the dependent
on *another's* bounty, the child of
charity!—Hold, Madam, you
have said enough; I shall find
other methods of seeing and speak-
ing to Miss Mildmay, without
your intercession: though her pa-
rents were beggars, though *For-*
tune may have pursued her to the
very

very brink of obscurity, in *my* heart she shall find an asylum. I would deign to say no more ; but, telling her I was ready to attend her to Lord Morpeth, we walked silently on till we joined his Lordship. He was standing in a circle formed round Lady D——, who was exhibiting her elegant figure in a minuet, which unexceptionably she dances the best of any woman in England.—Having resigned my charge, I prowled about the rooms in so churlish a mood, that I could have found in my heart to have fought every man, and railed at every woman, who was so unfortunate to address me

D 3 with

with that freedom which is consistent with the laws, modes, and customs, of a masquerade.—In the course of my rounds, I returned to the very spot where I had left Lord and Lady Morpeth; the latter was sitting down in a thoughtful attitude at a little distance from the former. I cast on her a look of indignation; her eyes were full of tears; but this *shew* of penitence did not affect me, and I placed myself by the side of her Lord; or rather my good genius appointed me to *that* station. I sighed, fidgeted, and was so apparently uneasy, that observing a change in my humour

mour, he asked the reason. His question kindled a sudden resolution. I said to myself, *this* man may be more worthy of my confidence than his *wife*; I must have *one* friend in the family at least, or I may be as well at the distance of a thousand leagues as in town with my charmer. In consequence of *this* happy resolution, take what follows, and observe, it passed in so low a key, that no one heard or interrupted us.

You ask, my Lord, what has flown away with my spirits, and I will answer you sincerely, that they have not been equal to the
keenest,

keenest, the *bitterest* disappointment I ever experienced. — Is there a woman in the case? — Yes. —

Then I sincerely pity you; for if you experience cruelty under a *mask*, where is *bare-faced* kindness to be met with? — The object of my passion is not present. I met her at your Lordship's house *last* Tuesday; lost my heart; and am willing to pay the ransom of my liberty to regain it. — Desperate young man! — Do not jest, my Lord; I have been *too* much trifled with already. Forgive my petulance; I really am unhappy. — Have you any opinion of *my* skill? if you have,
open

open your complaints freely, and command my *best* services.—Dear Morpeth, your goodness prevents my wishes. The Countess has a lovely girl under her protection.—I hope, my Lord, I do not *misapprehend* you. Olivia is so *very* dear to Lady Morpeth and myself, that I should be sorry were you to undeceive the sanguine hopes I presume to form barely upon the the hints you have let drop.—Your warmth restores me: Yes, I love your *Olivia*, I love her to distraction, one single view, one *short* hour, fixed me her *own* forever.—Courage, Castledown! she has a heart, a valuable heart, to
 —SIVILLO
 give

give you in return.—Shall I see her? Shall I endeavour to acquire this valuable heart? Will you assist me with opportunities for so great an acquisition?—You shall want no opportunity to convince her of your merit. She almost secludes herself from the world; but I will drag her from retirement, till, sensible of *your* assiduities, she quits it by inclination. —*I caught hold of his hand.* You recall me from death to life. *This* night have I been the victim of *two* extremes, *Hope* and *Despair*. —But you have not told me what occasioned the latter.—Lady Morpeth's reluctance to my visiting
Olivia.—

Olivia.—You mistake, my Lord, you was never more mistaken. I not only engage for Lady Morpeth's approbation; but will go *still* further, and *assure* you of her best services to forward your happiness with our lovely friend, whose worth would reflect glory on a diadem.—Is it possible that I can have so much misunderstood her Ladyship?—Come, come, you are all in the wrong; you have neither seen nor talked with Lady Morpeth. I honour your disinterested generosity, and cannot see your distress without wishing to relieve you. Our scheme was only intended to create a little innocent

innocent mirth, not to occasion unhappiness to any.

Away flew all my ill-humour. I saw the rest, I saw it in *no* disadvantageous light to my *dearest* views; I thought that there was not a man on earth who ever tasted *real* joy but myself. Whilst in imagination I exhausted prayers and intreaties to overcome the obstinacy of Lady Morpeth, I was the *whole* time pleading my passion with Olivia. His Lordship was unconscious of the Countess's design in this deception; but the appointment I tortured from her last Tuesday opened my eyes.

I saw

I saw it clearly ; I *revered* her *prudence* ; and *adored* her representative. Lord Morpeth desired I would not let his wife know that he had betrayed her secret, as she proposed a fund of entertainment from the errors her supposed appearance might occasion. I stayed only to assure him of inviolable silence, and flew to my angel. Are you come again to threaten me with your anger, my Lord ?—No, dearest—I was going to blunder out—*Olivia* ; the appellation of *Madam* rescued her delicacy from so terrible a wound, and me from destroying at one blow my present felicity.—

VOL. IV.

E

No,

No, dearest Madam, it is impossible to harbour *anger* against the the person on whose goodness we depend for happiness. Since I parted from your Ladyship, I have been taking a melancholy stroll round the rooms, and calling myself to a strict account for the violence of my former behaviour.— Now that Lord Castledown is restored to his *reason*, my satisfaction is returned. Indeed, my Lord, I did not mean to offend you; my advice proceeded from *friendship*. There are a thousand women in the world *more* amiable than the girl you distinguished by *your* favour; fix on any other, and you shall

shall have my best wishes for the success of your application.—I rejoice, I cannot express how *greatly* I am rejoiced, at the change I observe in your Lordship's disposition.—Sweet charmer! she might have spoke for ever, if she had not paused; never should I have interrupted the celestial music of her voice.—You congratulate me, Madam, on my change of disposition. If it is *less* gloomy than when I had the honour of leading you to Lord Morpeth, it is not from any alteration in my sentiments, but from the reflection that, if your bosom is animated with *one* spark of humanity, you

will become the *friend* of my passion, you will be my mediatrix with —— With whom, my Lord? there is *but* one whose name, whose *very* idea, you must avoid. — Renounce your partiality for *Olivia*, and direct *my* influence wherever *else* you please. — Dear, tormenting Lady Morpeth! and I pressed her hands to my lips. — She snatched them from me. — I do not understand this freedom, my Lord. — I do not understand your Ladyship's perverseness; and I retook my trembling prisoner's. — Be not alarmed, Madam! my sentiments for Lady Morpeth are those of respect and veneration; but

but for *Olivia*, a rooted, passionate affection, which *all your* philosophy will not be able to eradicate.

—My Lord, if you are not *more* moderate in your expressions, you will drive me from you—we have many observers; the subject of our debate may be misinterpreted.

—*Time* shall confute the wretched malice of such interpreters. Permit my visits to *Olivia*, and I will glory in publishing my happiness.

—I have told you, my —. She was going to say more, when we were joined by Lord Morpeth.— Complaining of fatigue, she desired her servants might be called.

I flew to obey her commands, and

had the exquisite reward of leading my disguised angel to the chair. The last words I whispered in her ear were these—remember the fate of Castledown is in your disposal.—She made no reply, and the stupid wretches, who were to bear off my treasure, not inspired with my feelings, carelessly dropped the head of her chair, turned round their clumsy shoulders, and trotted away with the same indifference as if they had been carrying a *common* burthen.—She was followed by Lord Morpeth; my *heart*, my *very soul*, went with her. What became of my remains I do not exactly

actly know; but suppose they were decently conveyed to *Hill-Street*, for about twenty minutes after I began to pick myself up by my own fire-side. Here I dosed over my good fortune, till all the servants in my family were busied in their morning avocations, and the little clock that stands over my chimney had struck eight. I started at the sound, packed up my reveries in the idea of Olivia, and carried them to my pillow.

If you *are*, or *ever* have been a lover, in reading over and over the account I send you of last night's transactions, you will find
more

more to encourage than damp my expectations.

L E T T E R XXI.

LADY ANN FOSTESS TO LADY HASSARD.

Cavendish-Square.

I Have done with contrivances—the most unsuccessful events attend my machinations, cramp my genius, and impede my pursuits. I shall be with you on Monday.

Adieu!—

LET-

LETTER XXII.

LADY EDGERTON TO MRS. OSMOND.

Paris.

BY the date of this you will find, my dearest mother, that we are on our return to Britain. The ardency with which I long to receive the embraces of my tenderly revered father, and yourself, can only speak my transports at every step that brings me nearer to you.

We have now been in Paris six days; and, at the earnest intreaties of our friend the Count *De Poland*,
fixed

fixed our residence in his house. Though we found the Count's bodily complaints much abated since we last saw him, yet the melancholy, that preyed on his mind at *Montpelier*, was not in the least diminished. Our presence inspired him with a momentary chearfulness: it was only momentary—it was not the *character* of his soul; he fixed his eyes on a picture of *Mademoiselle De Poland*, which hangs in the drawing-room, and a cloud of grief passing over his countenance, impressed it with all its *former* traces of sorrow. I have observed the picture I speak of with the greatest attention;

tention; it is a full-length, drawn when the original was ten years old; the subject and execution both exquisite. Whilst I am gazing on it, admiration is not the *only* sensation I experience; I rack my imagination to recollect in what beautiful face I have seen similar features. When I was presented at the French court in my way to *Montpelier*, I remember to have been much struck with the inimitable charms of *a Madame le Mair*; I have now but a faint idea of them, but am apt to believe it *must* be a resemblance to her that I discover in the picture of *Mademoiselle*.

Before

Before we came to Paris, our dear Count had led a most sedentary life; still on the same unhappy terms with his brother, he confessed to us he never ventured from home for fear of meeting him. We prevailed on him one morning to go out with us; at which time he visited the *Palace Royal*; whilst in the carriage he kept himself as concealed as possible, and never stepped from it but under visible terror. Through every apartment we passed, he first stopped at the door to examine who was there; and I once thought he would have fainted, on seeing the back of a man whose person might have

have been mistaken by a less terrified observer for that of the Duke *de Oboyne*. His countenance changed; he was retiring in the utmost agitation, when the *cause* of his sudden alarm, turning towards us, convinced him of his error; but though his *fears* vanished, yet he suffered from their effects the whole day after.

Sensible what a slave this good man was to his unconquerable apprehensions, and how painful the complaisance he shewed us; we gave over importuning him to accompany us on any future excursion. We made him ex-
VOL. IV. F ceedingly

ceedingly happy, by dispensing with his attendance ; and he spent the hours of our absence in preparing us an elegant reception on our return, for he had the art every day to vary our amusements. Yesterday we dined at ———, about ten miles from Paris ; we did not come back till nine o'clock. *Monsieur* and *Madame Tourville* were of our party, and previously engaged by our hospitable friend to spend the evening with us. As soon as the carriages stopped, the Count appeared to assist us in getting out. His welcome was in an unusual *tone* ; he gave me his hand ; he smiled—
a smile

a *smile* not to be described ; but it filled me with astonishment, and he talked as he led me to the *saloon* with a vivacity which would almost have persuaded me that his heart had never been touched by misfortune ; but if my amazement was great before, how was it heightened by what followed.

I here pause, my dearest Madam, to intreat your pardon for so long holding from you an event so interesting. The moment I sat down to write, it rushed to my pen ; but as all passions are enforced by contrast, I was desirous you should see the Count in the

F 2

miserable

miserable situation in which we found him on our arrival at *Paris*, before I presented him to you in the light you are *now* going to see him.

The folding doors of this magnificent apartment were thrown open — remember, Madam, I brought you to the saloon! — They were thrown open; musick, lights innumerable, a splendid circle formed of the most distinguished rank, proclaimed the *once* gloomy abode of pining distress *now* the habitation of animated festivity. I thought I should have sunk. I felt myself overpowered.

I was

I was struck with such a panick, I could not speak. I looked back on Sir William (he was escorting Madam Tourville)—his looks did not teach me the lesson of composure. I guess your surprise, Madam, said the Count; but you must *still* prepare for greater; (he pressed my hand) I am no longer the unhappy wretch you honoured with your friendship. He had time for no more. I took the whole for a dream, in which I was almost confirmed, when the Duke *de Oboyne* came forward to salute me. My dearest brother, (said the Count) there is but *one* woman in the world who is nearer

F 3 than

than *this* to the soul of your *de Poland*. The Duke embraced, and assured me with a politeness natural to his nation, but more peculiarly so to himself, that he rejoiced at an opportunity of renewing an acquaintance to which he owed the principal pleasure he had enjoyed at *Montpelier*. My visionary state considered, I did not acquit myself so ill as might have been expected, either in my returns to the Duke, or to the civilities I received from the rest of the company, to whom I was presented in a manner the most flattering. Sir William partook of the same kind warmth; neither

ther were *Monsieur* and *Madame Tourville* neglected. The ceremony of our presentation ended, the concert began, which lasted till near eleven, when the ball was opened by the Count *de Poland*, and I was honoured with his hand.——Six months, nay even six hours before, I should have supposed it *more* possible that I should have danced with the *French King*.

How sudden, how rapid, are the vicissitudes which attend our uncertain state in this fluctuating world! Any *other* time I could moralize whole hours on *this* extensive

tensive subject, but, at present, moralizing is *not* the habit of my mind.

Our minuet concluded, a beautiful *bouquet* on a gold salver was brought to the Count, who, placing the flowers in my bosom, said, with an affectionate smile, you are my Queen.—For this night, Lady Edgerton, do me the honour to give such a welcome to my friends as may convince them I consider their presence as no *small* addition to my felicity. This distinction was not the only one he paid me; for, at the same instant he said this, he fastened on my

my arm his own picture in a bracelet richly ornamented.—Dear Madam, I *must* drop the subject of self, or I do not know to *what* lengths my vanity may carry me. The collation which succeeded was consistent with the magnificence, taste, and order, with which every thing here was regulated. All was joy, happiness, and decorum; there was not less of *comfort* than *festivity* in our entertainment, and laughing *time* flew away equally laden with both.

The Duke *de Oboyne* sat next to me at supper; and *now*, that I can look on him without prejudice,
 he

he stands *second* in my esteem to his excellent brother. The Duke is addicted to shew and fashion, rather beyond what one supposes consistent with his advanced age; this may be called an impropriety—a fault it can scarcely be called: and as it is the only error I can distinguish in his judgement, for *this* one I am the *more* ready to allow him a pardon. He enquired particularly when we heard from Lord Castledown. I told him Sir William had a letter from his Lordship soon after his return to England, which was the only one we had received.—Did I hear of his being embarked in a serious attach-

attachment?—My reply was negative.—Then I can inform you, Madam, that he loves, and intends to give the world a positive proof of his passion, by exalting the object of it to the rank of his Countess.—I said I was sincerely rejoiced at any appearance that might enlarge his views of happiness; I did not know a *more* deserving, a *more* amiable young man.—The Duke seconded my praises with a warmth that testified the sincerity of his friendship for Lord Castle-down.—I asked if he knew the name of the Lady to whom his friend was attached—*that*, replied he,

he, his Lordship has omitted in the eagerness of his lover-like impatience to deck his mistress with all the beauty, graces, and virtues, his partial pencil could paint of real or imaginary perfections. I had a letter from him this day; all that he mentions of her present situation *is*, that she makes a part of your sister Lady Morpeth's family.——A thought *struck* me—I must have done with the Duke to tell you *what* it was.——Is it possible *Olivia* should be this fortunate woman?—Lady Morpeth may have *many* visitors, yet who is it that makes a part of her family but *Olivia*?—Lord
Castledown

Castledown has taste superior to most men ; is it strange, is it *so* very wonderful, if the clouds of unprosperous Fortune have not been able to obscure the beauties, the excellencies, of *our* Olivia from *his* observation?—I would give a great deal to be assured my sanguine hopes were not devoid of foundation.

You did not know, my dear mother, we had left *Montpelier*. How unfortunate ! Your letters are certainly forwarded to that place ; if there be any truth in my surmises, I hope we shall soon now receive a confirmation.

The Count's company did not leave us till three this morning, which made it late before we assembled at breakfast; and as soon as it was ended, the Count led us to the library; but what passed there must be my afternoon's subject, for I am already within ten minutes of dinner, and the motions of this family are all regulated to a nicety of exactness.

CONTINUATION.

I am just risen from table. The French set a long time *at* and *after* their meals; and our repast has been agreeably lengthened out by the Duke *de Oboyne's*

Oboyne's making one of the dinner party.

There is now as much affection discovered in the deportment of these noble brothers to each other, as not long since marked it with hatred and disgust. This mystery will be cleared to you by my collecting *such* parts of the Count's recital, which he gave us in the library, as will best serve to explain it.

Yesterday, about half an hour after we were gone out with *Monsieur* and *Madame Tourville*, the Duke *de Oboyne's* coach stopped

G 2 at

at the gate, and the Duke alighting, hastily commanded a woman who was in the carriage to follow him, and proceeded without asking a question to the apartment of his brother. The Count was that instant writing instructions to his agents who were in pursuit of *Mademoiselle de Poland*; and as he *reflected* on her unprotected condition, as he *thought* on the difficulties to which if living she was in all probability reduced, a tear blotted his paper. Of a sudden the door flew open—he started from his gloomy reverie, and lifting up his eyes, the sight of the Duke *de Oboyne* nailed him to his chair;

chair ; he sunk back immoveable, almost in a state of annihilation.

The Duke sprang towards him : he fell on his neck ; he sobbed out, My dear injured *Count*, my *friend*, my *brother*, does heaven *once* more permit me to embrace you ?

—His brother could not speak, but shrunk from his embraces.—

My dear Count, you *must* not, you *shall* not, *longer* fly me—you have been shockingly imposed on. Suffer me to disabuse you ; and if I do not prove *my* innocence, banish me your *sight*—banish me from your soul for ever. A heart by Nature so just, so tender, so benevolent, as the Count *de Po-*

land's, could not resist an attack like this; it *softened* into forgiveness, it *melted* into affection—he no more shrunk from the fraternal embrace, but returned it with fervor.—Are you innocent, then, my dear brother? Say again that you *are* innocent, and I may yet be happy.—Best of men, I *am* innocent as yourself of intentional evil; though undesignedly I have pierced your bosom with sorrow, could *all* I possess restore *your* quiet, you should not another moment lament the loss of Mademoiselle Arlington.—Alas, Duke! greatly as I love, severely as I deplore, my *lost* treasure, *you*
are

are as much concerned in *her* recovery as myself—she is the *niece* of *both*.——The *niece* of *both*! exclaimed the Duke, staggering with amazement; (his visage pale as that of a spectre) gracious God! she is then—*Annanette must* be the child of *our* Maria!—The Count assured him that she was, and he wept like an infant. Recovering himself enough to speak, My God! cried he, what a precipice have I escaped? *Nature* whispered me I loved Mademoiselle Arlington; I mistook her voice for the voice of passion;—my designs were consistent with purity and honour; yet she *might*—distrac-
tion!

tion!—my *own* niece *might* have been my wife. But why, Count, *this* long concealment? was it kind—was it brotherly?

Here an explanation followed: he ceased to condemn the Count; his reproaches turned against himself, and he raved at his cruelty to his sister, as if this had been the first time it had occurred to his recollection. As soon as he became a little calm, and their mutual agitation was in some measure subsided, he desired leave to produce the evidence of his innocence. The Count generously assured him he was perfectly satisfied;

fied; but his eagerness to remove the very shadow of suspicion could not be controuled. The woman whom he had brought with him waited his summons in the anti-chamber of the Count's apartment, and the Duke now stepping to the door, in a commanding accent, bade her to enter. "Woman, come in, (said he) and answer for thy crimes to those whom thy arts have rendered so unhappy."——Trembling, she obeyed, a handkerchief held to her eyes, which the Duke snatching away, asked his brother if he could recollect to have seen *that* face on any former occasion. I do—

do—I do, eagerly replied the Count; this is the *very* woman I saw at your palace; the *very* same who filled my mind with such circumstances as were derogatory to your honour, destructive to my peace. Stand still, *wretch*, said the Duke.—She was taking refuge from the angry looks he darted at her behind the Count's chair—*stand still*, stir not, on your peril, from the spot on which I have placed you. My Lord, continued he, I have long been miserable, because I could in no manner account for the perseverance with which you shunned my presence—it is true, *Made-*
moiselle

moiselle Arlington had escaped from
 my protection ; but, conscious I
 had given her *no* cause for so pre-
 cipitate a step, I did not think
 you could possibly set down her
 elopement to my conduct ; your
 rejecting all my advances, even to
 the sending back my letters un-
 opened, began to make me suspect
 I had some *secret* enemy, who
 filled your generous mind with
false opinions. The abandoned
 creature before us forged such a
 tale of your behaviour, the morn-
 ing you meant to have blessed me
 with your presence, that though I
 rejoiced at your return, as if, in
 giving you back, *Fortune* had ex-
 hausted

hausted her *whole* store of comforts on me; yet I could not but believe, from this wretch's declaration, that the fatigues and dangers you must have encountered in an absence of six years had disordered your intellects.

The story of her invention was this:—You rushed into the room where she was sitting, announced your own name, and enquired for Mademoiselle Arlington;—that, frightened to death, at the wildness of your looks, she very submissively told you of her elopement, on which intelligence you stormed, swore, and raved like a madman;

madman; that, in the rage of your fury, you demolished a pier glass, the fragments of which she produced to strengthen her evidence. A thousand other instances of insanity she asserted, concluding the whole with your having called down the bitterest imprecations on your own head, if ever you saw or spoke to me again. This was so unlike my brother, that in an agony of soul I grieved for his lost reason. You know, my dear Count, the steps I have taken to obtain an interview—your doors shut against me—all your friends denied entrance—what an appearance! You went to

Montpelier. I followed you thither.—You were gone—I found myself in the same lodging you had occupied—I questioned the man of the house; his answers regarding the manner in which you fled, the moment of my arrival, confirmed rather than *lessened* my apprehensions. On my return to Paris, I consulted the physicians who attended you, and by them I was assured your mind was unimpaired, though you were giving way, they added, to a melancholy which threatened the most dangerous effects to your constitution. It was *now* that I began to discover the finger of mischief

mischief *must* have been employed in our disunion; circumstances that *lately* came to my knowledge of this creature's baseness opened my eyes, and my suspicions lighted on her. I last night brought this vile incendiary to a confession, which the rack should otherwise have tortured from her. And now, woman, it remains with you to repeat your guilt in the presence of my much-injured brother; suppress not the *smallest* article, or know the severity of Justice shall overtake thee. She was by this time far less intimidated than at her first entrance; but the Duke's commands were

H 2

not

not to be opposed ; and what in her forced obedience she confessed, was in substance as follows :

After the death of the Duchess, having formed the ambitious design of making herself agreeable to the Duke, she saw his preference for Mademoiselle Arlington with envy, and determined at any rate to get rid of so formidable a rival.——She outwardly affected for her the greatest respect, and the strongest attachment, by which she acquired a solid place in her esteem ; but though Mademoiselle treated her with particular marks of favour, she was *too* prudent

prudent to trust her with the secret uneasiness she suffered from the Duke's honourable solicitations. One evening, by applying her ear to the door, this wretch overheard a conversation which threatened the absolute destruction of her hopes, and convinced her Mademoiselle had it in her power to become *Duchess de Oboyne* whenever she thought proper. Something must now be done to defeat the Duke's intentions, and, on the foundation of that aversion Mademoiselle had shewn to the proposals (this female Machiavel had overheard) she built her infamous designs.

H 3

The

The next day, certain to find Mademoiselle in her own apartment, counterfeiting a passion of grief, and shedding tears in abundance, she entered the dressing-room abruptly, when starting as if she had not expected to find her there, pretended to hurry back with equal precipitancy. Mademoiselle, surprised, prevented her retiring, and kindly enquired what had occasioned that appearance of sorrow? The artful hypocrite appeared to elude her enquiry; but at last, with much seeming reluctance, she said, her concern proceeded from her having accidentally discovered that the

the Duke harboured designs against the virtue of her beloved young Lady. Poor Mademoiselle, terrified almost to fainting, begged to know on what reasons she had formed a supposition so shocking; —when, according to a story she had before framed, such circumstantial proofs were produced of the Duke's base intentions, and of his purpose to have her conveyed from the palace to his *villa* in the country; that a mind less alarmed than *Mademoiselle de Poland's* might have sucked in the invidious poison. The honourable passion he had avowed was *no* longer concealed from her disguised enemy,
and

and *now* her own fears taught her to consider the declaration of this honourable passion as a mask to conceal real villainy ; her judgement told her *how* unlikely it was that a man of the Duke's exalted rank should seriously intend to marry an indigent creature of *low* birth, when the customs of France are so particularly strict in point of unequal alliances ; though, had he seriously meant what he proposed, she declared to this creature her repugnance to become his wife would have been unconquerable. She embraced the artful minion as the saviour of her honour ; she overwhelmed her
with

with acknowledgments that would amply have repaid the highest act of *genuine* friendship; and by the assistance of this treacherous woman, the same evening accomplished her escape. You have now, Madam, the sum of her confession, to which she added, that some months after, when the Count returned, contrary to the expectation of his family, she foresaw the end of her power approach; she knew the influence he had over the Duke, and that, if there was the possibility of a chance in her favour, it *must* depend on keeping the brother's asunder. This scheme, said she, succeeded;

succeeded; I expected no *more*; I could not suppose the breach I had made would be kept open for ever; but misfortunes at a distance are better guarded against than those that overtake us by surprise. I have provided for the blow that has now overtaken me; and, if the Duke will suffer me to enjoy quietly the fruits of his munificence, I *can* and *will*, my Lords, put you out of suspense for the fate of Mademoiselle Arlington, otherwise the *rack* with which I have been *threatened* shall not extort the secret from me.

Daring and bold as her conditions were, they were eagerly

agreed to, when drawing a letter from her bosom, and presenting it to the Duke, she said, you will see by *this*, my Lord, how much Mademoiselle believes me her friend. Here the woman asked for her leave of dismissal, which was readily granted; but she was sternly forbid *ever* again to set her foot in the palace *de Oboyne*, and, making a low curtsy, she marched off.

The direction on the back of the letter she had left behind her was not the writing of *Mademoiselle de Poland*, but the contents testified her well-known character;

ter; alternately did her uncles press the paper to their lips, whilst the transports of our dear Count was almost insupportable. The contents are exactly these:—

L E T T E R.

‘ *Dear good virtuous Creature,*

‘ IF ever it is in my power to
‘ shew, by *more than* words, my
‘ gratitude to the *preserver* of my
‘ honour, be assured, I will not
‘ omit the occasion. I write this
‘ line to relieve your *honest* mind
‘ from the apprehensions I know
‘ you will suffer on my account.
‘ —Some English Ladies, of re-
‘ spectable rank and character,
have

' have taken me under their pro-
 ' tection. I am *now* in Britain,
 ' and have bid a final adieu to
 ' France. *Once* I had a friend,
 ' whose presence made your coun-
 ' try dearer to me than I am able
 ' to express; *that* friend, that
 ' *dear tender* friend, is no more;
 ' the *peace*, the *happiness* with
 ' which he watched over, like my
 ' guardian angel, *one* of his *own*
 ' family—*one*, the *very* nearest to
 ' himself;—has *since* attempted to
 ' destroy; but God Almighty has
 ' raised me other friends. Make
 ' your *worthy* heart easy; let it
 ' not feel a pang for me. I am as
 ' happy in my present situation as
 ' I ever expect to be in the
 VOL. IV. I ' course

‘ course of a tedious journey, the
 ‘ smoothest paths of which are
 ‘ strewed with thorns, and made
 ‘ rugged by disappointments.—
 ‘ May heaven, *good soul*, reward
 ‘ the sincerity of *your* virtue, to
 ‘ which I owe my preservation.

Annanette Arlington.

Charming—charming *Made-*
moiselle de Poland! If *such* purity,
such piety as your’s, cannot be
 exempt from troubles, who is
 there that has a right to complain
 of Fortune’s severest persecutions?
 —This, my dear mother, is the
 reflection that occurs to me on
 transcribing the above. When
 the Count came to *that* part of
 her

her letter where she pathetically laments her *lost* friend, the colouring was so strong he could not fail of seeing his *own* likeness; and the lively tenderness with which she preserved in her memory his former kindness, affected him to a degree of enthusiastic rapture;—it was the *last* addition but *one* his joy could possibly admit. The Duke stood confused (said the Count as he repeated this scene to us) but his confusion was not of *guilt*, it was that of a man whose humanity is shocked at being unintentionally the cause of affliction to a fellow-creature; and it was heightened by the circumstances of knowing

it was the hearts of his *nearest* connections that he had afflicted. You may suppose, Madam, the Count omitted no endeavours to assuage the poor Duke's self condemnation; and, I am persuaded, their re-union will not be less permanent that it has been sudden. *Mademoiselle de Poland*, already restored in idea, our inestimable friend was no longer the melancholy victim of despair, and you will now be able fully to account for our *last* evening's festivity.

The Duke proposes to accompany his brother to England in pursuit of his niece, and we are to be honoured with the residence of
both

both at our house in town. Let me prevail on you, my dear parents, to meet us there; it will be hard to deny this request, as it will be impossible for me, with any degree of convenience, to leave London whilst our friends continue the guests of Sir William; yet, at all events, I must give them the slip, if *you* are not disposed to indulge us.

We should have left Paris this week, but the Count's physicians have stamped a negative on our intentions; they say it will not be safe for him to set out at least for three weeks. *His* impatience is not to be described; the *Duke's*

but little inferior; of our *own*, I have no occasion to make professions, but we are obliged to stay; we cannot, consistent with friendship, leave the noble brothers behind us—gratify me with one letter whilst I remain here, it will shorten the hours of my banishment from your embraces.

I have not heard for an age from Lady Morpeth. I can only account for *her* silence in the same manner I do for *your's*, that the letters are gone to *Montpelier*.

I long to hear Lord Castledown is really seriously attached—on *many* considerations I wish to have
it

it confirmed. What a pleasing event, should *Olivia* be the object of his choice ! A thousand times I have thought of those words—*she makes a part of Lady Morpeth's family.* Is not the expression striking ?

Adieu, my dearest mother ! your next will relieve me from the perplexities of suspense.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXVIII.

LORD CASTLEDOWN TO SIR JAMES SEATON.

Hill-Street.

LADY Morpeth is my warmest advocate with Olivia. The Earl courts her for me with the same avidity he would a mistress for himself. I figh out my very soul at her feet, yet she is obdurate. Many chances are against me—*one* chance only in my favour; even that one poor *blink* called *Hope*, which keeps me from being froze to death by her coldness, she would extinguish, if I did not preserve it cantiously, and renew it at her eyes on every appearance

pearance of sensibility they betray. I keep an exact register on my mind, how often this little *spark* has been expiring, how often rekindled. Here follows the sum total.

The next day after the masquerade I flew to Lord Morpeth's. She was not visible—she was indisposed—she could not see me—so said the Countess. I *thought* life odious—a *Roman* exit glorious. Lady Morpeth went to her apartment—the arguments of Lady Morpeth prevailed—she brought back with her my divine Olivia. Life was no longer odious; I was no longer a *Roman*.
She

She received my devoirs with an air of indifference—*bad*. Her indifference was evidently counterfeit—*good*. I seized her hand; the liberty displeased her—she drew it from me—*worse*. Its trembling convinced me her whole lovely frame was agitated—*better*. No more attack on her delicacy—the conversation general—a heavenly morning—my angel all smiles—all good-humour.

For this visit my account fairly stated stands thus: in my disfavour ooo—in my favour, symptoms 3, *partialities excepted*.

Six attempts followed successively—I ventured only to explain myself by attentions, particularities, and so forth, without once daring to say *I love you, Olivia*; though I had said a thousand times *more* to her at the masquerade. What the devil ailed me? I never felt myself a coward before. Well, there is in real love a something of diffidence not to be defined—unaccountable—strangely unaccountable!—My charmer visibly approved it—it seemed to gain her confidence by a sort of kindred claim to the refinement of her soul, and my vanity whispered me at the conclusion of our not unexpressive interviews,

views, that I was rather *debtor* than *creditor* to Fortune.

Lady Morpeth goes seldom into public; but when she does, Olivia now constantly attends her—I receive a hint on those occasions from Morpeth, and do not stay at home to whine and sigh like a puppy; yet, sometimes, I have paid dearly for being of the party; the admiration that meet, follow, and intercept the footsteps of my angel, has given me many a severe pang, lest another more daring than myself should be more explicit. Full of this idea, and an extraordinary bottle of champagne, I yesterday broke from our
set

set at the Star and Garter, and was in South-Audley-street an hour before the time I had appointed for escorting the Ladies to the opera. Early as it was, I hope I was not unexpected; Olivia, at least, was not unprepared for my reception. I found her alone, and dressed for the evening; her charms blazed upon me in full lustre—I might as well have swallowed water as champagne—I was intoxicated; but I owed my state of intoxication to another cause; *love*, not *wine*, inspired me, I seized the moment of inspiration; threw myself at her feet, and opened my whole soul without reserve. Neither confu-

sion nor surprise actuated her countenance; she intreated me to rise. I was deaf to her intreaties. She then offered me a reward for my obedience. I saw her snowy hand stretched towards me; the bribe was powerful; I grasped it as eagerly as the venal *tool* of ambition does the price of his prostitution. My sweet tyrant would have treated me more ungenerously than even those poor wretches are treated by the agents who corrupt them; for no sooner had she obtained her point, than she attempted to regain the hire of my condescension. I struggled to maintain my property; I told her it was mine by purchase, and I would

would not relinquish my right to the treasure she had given me. Finding it in vain to contend against a declaration so determined, she smiled, and I remained in quiet possession. My tongue, now disentangled from its *former* restraint, performed double duty; it said, it swore, a thousand—thousand tender things, to which my heart warmly assented; but which it will be immaterial to repeat, unless you should ever be as much in love as I am, and desire from me a lesson of experience. Having heard as much as she thought necessary to her information, without considering the violence she did me by forcing me to

H 2 suppress

suppress a million of assurances yet unprotected, her coral lips gently divided, from whence issued, in the voice of harmony, what I was to suppose her final determination; but I was not disposed to give it all the credit she seemed to expect: a chrystal harpinger strayed from her dove-like eye, to tell me her *words* and *inclinations* were at variance.

I have changed my intentions; I will not treat you with a syllable of what she said; if ever she alters her resolution, I will not give it under my signature that she has so much of human weakness in her whole composition as even to
subject

subject her to the very common frailty of both sexes—*instability*.

I must get my mother's consent—but how, God knows—without it, nothing can be done. Her motives for refusing the hand, the heart, the soul, I offered her, were not *those* of caprice or affectation; they were glorious to herself; they were flattering to me—but, my mother! there it sticks! You know my mother well, Seaton—Do you suppose it possible? Well, I will not despair! perhaps I may yet prevail on Olivia to see her connection with my family in another light; if I *should*—call it not fickleness, call it the noblest

K 3 efforts

efforts of mistaken generosity convinced by reason—but first, my mother.—A thought this moment occurs—more of it hereafter.—Oh, Olivia! why rest the peace of my soul on a point so doubtful?

Lady Morpeth interrupted our *tête-a-tête*. I openly renewed my pretensions in her presence. She interested herself warmly in my favour, but without success—to that *one* single objection still invincible! Lady Morpeth's politeness spared any verbal reflections on my mother, whilst her countenance spoke every thing. I thanked her Ladyship for her kind interposition;

interposition; told her I was grateful for her change of opinion, and bid her remember the masquerade. My eye glanced a *stolen* look at my angel; her face and bosom were covered with a deep blush.—Lady Morpeth smiled; and Olivia looked expressively at her, then at her watch.—She took the hint, and immediately their chairs were ordered.

On the whole, I am by no means a despairing lover; in the midst of my darkest prospects, there are many little inlets for Hope to peep through. Now to my mother. I will let you into her present situation; and leave to
your

your own ingenuity the discovery of my designs. Of late her Ladyship has been exceedingly gloomy—whenever I call to see her, which is generally once a day, she scarce speaks; her only language is sighs and groans. I am continually pressing her to call in her physician; and yesterday morning, perceiving she looked more deplorable than ever, I begged, for my satisfaction, she would no longer delay this important matter, but send for him immediately. She shook her head—I cannot oblige you, Castledown.—Alas! you mistake my case—my poor *wretched* body is in good repair; my soul alone is disordered. My
whole

whole concern was now directed to her reason; and before I left the house, I enquired privately of her woman, what had occasioned so great a change in the disposition of her Lady. She told me her Ladyship's spirits were remarkably good till the Countess of H—— came to pay her a visit of condolance; that they went out together the same evening, and from that time she began to perceive an alteration—a sort of thoughtfulness, to which her Lady was never before addicted.—A great intimacy succeeded: Lady H—— called two, three, four times in a day; that they frequently went out together,

gether, and she now feared her dear Lady's head was turned, as she did nothing but weep and lament over her soul, saying it would be burnt to a cinder in fire and brimstone. In this manner, said she, please your Lordship, does my good Lady talk, till my very hair stands an end; for if so great a personage as her Ladyship should be burnt to a *cinder*, what will become of us poor people? I smiled at her simplicity, and asked what other changes she had observed. Why, my Lord, a card has not been seen in the house this six weeks; this is a very sad change, indeed; the servants declare to a man that they will leave the

the family unless their wages are raised in proportion.—Well, is this all, Mrs. Thomson? Oh, no, my Lord, nor half what I could tell you—the other day, one of the house-maids, who was rubbing the steps to my Lady's dressing-room, and singing one of her old ballads, as ill luck would have it, my Lady returned with Lady H—— just in the nick of time, and hearing Susan's voice, sent for her to forbid her ever again singing profane songs; that hymns and *spiritual* songs were all she would have sung under her roof—upon this, Susan gave warning to quit her place, and the butler in an hour after did the same; in short,

short, my Lord, I have enough to do between my Lady, the men, and the maids, and she burst into tears. I advised her to patience, and hastened home, fully convinced that my mother's malady was *incurable*. I am sorry for it; though, on her Ladyship's conversion, I found my views of succeeding with Olivia.

Not one word more—it is forty minutes after seven;—at eight I am engaged—where and to whom my punctuality will inform you.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXIX.

MRS. OSMOND TO LADY EDGERTON.

Auberry Grove.

PROVIDENCE, my dear Henrietta, dispenses its blessings with a liberal hand on your happy, *thrice* happy parents. The child of their fondest affection, the child whose tender duty has supported us in our severest trials, is returning to our embraces; and Emily, our dearest *Emily*, lost to us before, is now all our own. No longer divided are our children in their powers of communicating peace and comfort to our bosoms. I suppose by this time your letters will be returned from *Montpelier*;

VOL. IV.

L

if

if so, they will explain the source from whence is derived my present transporting sensations; or, if they are not returned, I have said enough to inform you, that Lady Morpeth has seen her errors; that all our former apprehensions are over, and that you have now an amiable sister. Your father calls Emily's return to rectitude *the birth of soul*—he has enjoyed more happiness within the last month, than in sixteen years preceding—ininitely more, tho' every grain of satisfaction could have been extracted from the heavy burthen of self-accusation that has oppressed him since his fatal acquiescence to the request of
Lady

Lady Castledown. Every thing contributes to fill up the measure of our joy; your prophetick spirit directed yon to the person whose beauty and merit has captivated the affections of Lord Castledown. Olivia is one of the most exemplary young creatures that ever nature produced; under the direction of Heaven, she has been the second cause of restoring to us our long-lost Emily. How providential your meeting her in France, how fortunate your sending her over!—I owe her much—my peace is nearly connected with her felicity, and, now an opportunity courts her to render that felicity perfect.

L 2

We

We share with you the prospect of returning happiness to your inestimable friend the Count *de Poland*. I have known *pain*, I have tasted of *regret*, I have experienced *disappointments*; but the recollection of *pain*, *regret*, *disappointments*, only serve to make my *present* joys more exquisite.

The indefatigable bees from various blossoms collect their sweets—from various causes the human mind extracts its comforts—if a plant obnoxious to the nature of those delicate sweets happens in their way, by instinct they avoid it—the bitters that are strewed in the path of man he cannot

cannot fly from, but it is always in his power to make them *less* unpalatable by industriously gathering honey from the flowers of Hope.

We see without reluctance the necessity you are under of remaining in town, whilst your friends continue in England; and are determined to meet, or at least to join you there. Lord Morpeth will not suffer *Emily* to move in her present condition, and he now not only consents to, but approves her staying in town, till after her recovery—the time which will confirm their mutual felicity draws near—she is not dispirited

L 3 —the

—the delightful thought of being a parent counter-balances those little fears, to which women in her situation are often subjected; she wishes me to be with her at the critical moment, and I have promised at all events to gratify her wishes. Adieu! my dearest Henrietta.

L E T T E R XXX.

LORD CASTLEDOWN TO SIR JAMES SEATON.

Hill-Street.

HEAVY clouds often bring on the morning—a splendid noon succeeds—and a calm evening

ing closes the comfortable day. Olivia *frowned*—dreary were my prospects! Olivia *smiles*, gloom is dispelled, and my views are no longer obscured by vapour.

I charge you, my friend, on your best hopes I *charge* you, to embrace my doctrine—to follow my example. Avoid what I *once* called the state of *blessed singleness*; look out for an amiable woman; let her convince you, that a single state is not a state of *blessedness*—I disavow my former opinion, and beg pardon of the whole charming sex for having ever presumed to harbour a thought derogatory to their power of dispersing happiness.

ness. So seriously at heart do I take your reformation, that before I tell you by what wonderful methods the finishing stroke was put to my own, I shall hold up to your view the picture of a *bachelor*, and oppose it to the portrait of a *married man*, such as they now appear to the eye of my unclouded reason.

A *bachelor* is a sort of whimsical being, which nature never intended to create; he was formed out of all the *odds* and *ends* of what materials were left after the great work was over; unluckily for him, the *finer* passions are all mixed up in the composition
of

of those creatures intended for social enjoyments; what remains for the bachelor is hardly enough to rub round the crusty mould into which he is thrown, to avoid waste—some seasoning, that he may not be quite insipid, must be substituted in the stead of more valuable ingredients, so in Dame Nature tosses *self-love*, without weight or measure—a kind of understanding that is fit for no other use—a sprinkling of wisdom which turns to acid from the sour disposition of the vessel in which it is contained, and the whole composition is concluded with an immoderate portion of oddities. Thus *formed*, thus *finished*, a bachelor

chelor is popp'd into the world—mere lumber, without a possibility of being happy himself, or essentially contributing to the happiness of others. His only business is to keep himself *quiet*; he gets up to lie down, and lies down to get up. No tender impressions enliven his waking hours—no agreeable reveries disturb his drowsy slumbers. If he ever speaks the language of sensibility, he speaks it on the excellence of some favourite dish, or on the choice liquors with which his cellars abound; on such subjects he feels the rapture of a lover.—The pace of a *bachelor* is *sober*; he would hardly mend it to get out of a storm,

storm, though that storm were to threaten a deluge; but shew him a woman who is intitled to the compliment of his hat, and he will shuffle on as if he was walking for a wager. His house-keeper or his laundress he can talk to without reserve, but any other of the sex, whose condition is above a useful dependent, is his terror. A coffee-house is his *sanctum sanctorum*, against *bright* eyes and *dazzling* complections; here he lounges out half his days— at home he sits down to his *unso-* *cial* meals, and when his *palate* is pleased, he has no other passion to gratify. Such is a bachelor— such the life of a bachelor—what becomes

becomes of him after death, I am not casuist enough to determine.

Now for the *married man*. The felicity of a married man never stands still; it flows perpetual, and strengthens in its passage; it is supplied from various channels; it depends more on others than himself: from participation proceeds the most extatic enjoyments of a *married man*.

By an union with the *gentlest*, most *polished*, most *beautiful* part of the creation, his *mind* is harmonized, his *manners* softened, his *soul* animated by the tenderest, liveliest sensations.—Love, gratitude,

tude, and *universal* benevolence, mix in all his ideas. The house of a married man is his *paradise*; he never leaves it without regret, never returns to it but with gladness—the *friend* of his soul, the *wife* of his bosom, welcomes his approach with susceptibility;—joy flushes her cheek—mutual are their transports. Infants, lovely as the spring, climb about his knees, and contend which shall catch the envied kiss of paternal fondness. Smiling plenty, under the guardianship of *æconomy*, is seen in every department of his family. Generosity stands porter at his door; Liberality presides at his table, and social Mirth gives

VOL. IV. M to

to time its most pleasing motion.
 —To the existence of a married man, there is no termination; when Death overtakes him, he is only translated from one heaven to another; his glory is immortalized, and his children's *children* represent him on earth to the *last* generation.

Now, dear James, I have done my duty—the pictures are both before you—you must copy after one or the other. I think you are turned of thirty; time is precious; you have none to throw away on deliberation—let your *best* judgment direct you—the choice of your friend is already determined.

CONTI-

CONTINUATION.

Thursday I attended Lady Morpeth and my angel to *Bach's* concert, and returned with them to supper.—The post was just arrived; my servant gave me my letters at the door, and I stepp'd into the library, impatient to read them, expecting that evening a letter of importance.—This cursed business was afterwards the means of making me appear the veriest fool in nature. On entering the dining-room, I there saw Lord and Lady Morpeth, but no Olivia. *Olivia* was flown—her absence was to be accounted for a thousand ways. I was easy.—

M 2

Supper

Supper placed on the table, servants waiting, she did not appear; my ease abated; I *felt*, I *looked* disconcerted. I stood at the back of my chair, my eyes wandering from one door to another. Lord and Lady Morpeth enjoyed my confusion—they took their places—you need not wait, said her Ladyship, (the servants disappeared) and looking at each other, *smiled* significantly; prithee, Castledown, why so melancholy?—I did not answer his question, but *still* looked at the door.—Come, c me, my Lord, said the Countess, for heaven's sake, sit down; let us go to supper; I am monstrously hungry.—Are we to sit down

down *alone*, Madam? (I asked this peevishly). She answered gravely, we expect no *other* company; *Olivia* desired to be excused. *Desired to be excused!* O, very well; I am *perfectly* satisfied; and I flung myself into my chair. You must guess the situation of my mind, *Seaton*, for I cannot describe it; she had no pretence to illness the moment before I parted with her; to what cause then could I attribute her *desire* of being excused. They pressed me to eat; I was *too* proud to betray the agonies I suffered; but I thought the first bit I put in my mouth would have choaked me. You have no appetite, said Morpeth; but here

is a cordial that will revive your spirits. My divinity broke upon us as he spoke; and giving Lady Morpeth an opened letter, said, she hoped *that* would apologize for her absence; it was accompanied by a blush of so much sensibility, that I could almost swear my name was mentioned in the letter. I snatched her snowy hand as it crossed the table, and on it imprinted my thanks for her having relieved me from a state of torture, not that I owe *any* thanks to my ingenious friends who had contrived to build it on her *accidental* disappearance. The remainder of the evening *more* than repaid me for the torments with which

which it had commenced. I entered into an appointment with my own heart—to-morrow, said I, I will go to my mother—to-morrow my fate shall be decided; and with *this* resolution I left my Olivia.—To-morrow *came*; I went to St. James's-square; it was about eleven in the morning; the table was spread for breakfast, but her Ladyship did not appear for more than half an hour. A middle-aged man dressed in black, his hair nicely powdered and turned up in a round curl, saluted me at my entrance; I had never seen him before, but he appeared to be *at home* and *quite* at his ease. I returned his salute with civility;
—we

—we entered into a conversation, in which he gave me to understand he had the honour to be appointed my mother's *domestic* chaplain, and that he was patronized by the Countess of H—, thro' whole recommendation he filled his present office. I wished to avail myself of his influence in case *such* an auxiliary should be necessary, which consideration made me pay him some slight compliment on his situation, and he did not seem displeased at the distinction.

In the course of our *chit-chat*, he modestly enough concealed his opinion in regard to his religious matters,

matters, which I have often observed those kind of enthusiasts are forcing upon you on all occasions. This moderate apostle contented himself with *now* and *then* glancing at the *luxury*, the *vices*, or *dissipation* of the *times*, without being either impertinent or unentertaining.—My mother's presence put an end to our *tête-a-tête*. Her pace as she approached us was *slow* and *solemn*; her face *pale* as ashes; nor could I help thinking the countenance with which her chaplain received her must resemble a *Newgate* ordinary when he attends his convict on the day of execution.—I never saw a change so instantaneous, so glaringly

ringly ridiculous. We sat down to breakfast—my mother *sighed* frequently, *talked* little, and eat less—my appetite was taken away by the puzzling business of thinking—my brain was contriving a thousand methods to announce the subject of my visit, whilst the *pious* Doctor, seriously applying to the hot rolls in conjunction with a comfortable basin of chocolate, amply made up for the deficiency of both by dint of his own masterly performance. My mother asked me what I had done with myself the preceding evening. I was at *Bach's* concert, Madam; after which I supped with Lord Morpeth.

Son!

Son! my son! (shaking her head, lifting up her hands and eyes) Heaven turn your heart.— I once delighted as you now do in those profane, intoxicating pleasures. Just as I arrived at the very *brink* of perdition, the *spirit* awakened me to the *horrors* of my situation—Oh! may the same particular inspiration snatch you also from your present danger!—Converse freely, my Lord, with this worthy reverend *divine*, pointing to the Doctor, and he will convince you how much more rapturous enjoyment is to be found, when joining the songs of *Saints* and *ministers*, than by listening to the band of *Satan*, who, by softening

ing

ing our poor weak souls with sounds of voluptuousness, easily make us the prey of his devices.

The Doctor gave his assent with a groan; he was *too* busily employed to ratify it more circumstantially.—Pardon me, my dear Madam, and I took her hand; pardon me, if I presume to dissent from the argument you advance—I am a young man, but I have my serious moments; and I hope no action of my life has been *remarkably* culpable. I reverence Supreme Omnipotence; I gratefully partake the good things Providence has *created* or *instituted* for our use.—Religion, in the
light

light my reason teaches me to behold her, is not robed in terrors; her precepts are mild, benign; she persuades, she courts, but does not terrify us to obedience. Religion, though Queen of Virtues, is no enemy to *innocent* amusements.

Castledown, I have heard you thus far with patience.—Condescend then, Madam, to increase the favour you do me by *one* moment more of your attention.—I sometimes think, but seldom *speake* of the subject we are now upon—Your Ladyship introduced it, and I wish to acquaint you with my settled principles, that for the

VOL. IV. N future

future we may understand each other, and avoid recriminations.—

I give you my permission, son, to support as well as you can your *poor* uninspired judgment; but take care not to defend what you call *innocent* amusements—Vice, destructive Vice, is concealed under that appellation.—*Vice*, Madam, shall not find an advocate in me; and I acknowledge my own insufficiency to give the opinions to which I am attached their proper weight, I only mean to explain my sentiments distinctly.—Suppose, Madam, a great monarch invites you by his ambassadors to his kingdom, which is situated at a great distance from
your

your present habitation—suppose from the munificence of his promises you chearfully enter on the journey, previously informed what on *your* part is expected to procure you a gracious reception. Love and gratitude must naturally be the effusions of your soul, when you contemplate the infinite obligations this great monarch lays you under; no fear can possibly mix with those effusions but the fear of offending by neglecting the conditions into which you have voluntarily entered. Suppose, to make your journey pleasant and commodious, this *good* prince, by whom you are invited, has filled the road with refreshments of

N 2

every

every kind to accommodate your body, exhilarate your spirits, or soothe your mind, on an expedition unavoidably fatiguing. Now, allow me to ask you, Madam, and I will venture to apply the same question to your chaplain; do you *best* testify your duty to your benefactor by adoring his bounty, and *moderately* partaking the blessings he sets before you; or, by turning from them in disgust, as if treacherously intended as a pernicious trap to ensnare your safety?

They looked at each other—it was not difficult to decypher the thoughts of either.—My mother,
by

by her silence, evidently put it on her *spiritual director* to answer my *allegory*, whilst his countenance spoke how much he was divided to preserve his consequence with her Ladyship, and not offend a man who has in his gift some valuable preferment, of which circumstance he did not seem uninformed. — *Three* audible *hems* cleared the organs of his speech; and the *fourth* was attended with a happy delivery. — May I presume to interpret your silence, *my good Lady*, as a command to answer his Lordship's application to *myself*? — She gave an assenting nod. — He stood up; his attitude would have graced a pulpit, but,

N 3 like.

like too many of our popular preachers who speak to gain applause rather than *convince* their audience, his doctrine was by no means orthodox; it was such a complication of rhetorical flowers and false reasoning, the daub of flattery stuck so thick on every part of *my Lordship's* character, whilst the *faults* and *blemishes* of human nature were so nakedly exposed, that I have not patience to rehearse his *cant*; I shall only say, the credit he gave to himself, and the approbation he received from my mother, made up for the indifference with which I attended to his *elaborate*, almost *unintelligible* harangue.—*Sound* without *sense*
can

can convey no pleasure to a mind that is not qualified by *ignorance* for its reception. I did not appear inclined to lengthen out the conversation, he observed it, took the hint, and left the room.

Now was my trial to come on, or rather *now* was I to open my campaign—Love and war admit of stratagem, therefore *no* reflection on a *lover* or a *soldier* to adopt it.—Armed with the picture of my charmer, no matter how it came into my possession, I thought I required no other weapon to overcome my adversary; I presented it to my mother.—Did your Ladyship ever see a face so beautiful,

beautiful, so engaging as this?—She looked *earnestly* at it, and seemed struck with surprize. I must confess, son, if the original is half so handsome as *this* picture, she might prove a dangerous enemy to the soul of a young man.—Satan has *various* modes of tempting us to destruction—beware of the *temptor*.—Dear Madam, *Satan*, believe me, has no communication with a mind so pure, so heavenly, as that which belongs to the person whose representation has engaged your attention.—Alas, my Lord! you do not know the power of the *evil* one. He must, Madam, be powerful indeed, if he can make the *seat* of piety, of wisdom,

wisdom, of purity, his vile machine to convey wickedness into a world already over-stocked with his agents.

Fie upon you, fie upon you, Castledown! I tremble to hear you talk in this manner.—I beg your pardon, Madam; by *what* expression have I been so unfortunate as to offend you?—I don't like to argue, my Lord; but you did not speak with respect.—Of whom? my dear mother; you cannot surely accuse me with want of respect to your Ladyship, and if I spoke *feelingly* of the distinction between *virtue* and *vice*, where is the crime for which I
am.

am so seriously rebuked?—I smiled as I said this; and taking her hand, pressed it to my lips. She saw her error, and almost returned my smile; but re-assuming her *new* acquired gravity she sighed deeply, then asked if I was acquainted with the Lady whose picture I had shewn her.—I replied with an air of indifference, that I had sometimes the honour of seeing her at Lord Morpeth's.—And is she really so lovely, so amiable, as you describe her?—It is impossible, Madam, to *exaggerate* her perfections.

Take care what you say, son; perfections do not belong to our nature—

nature—Satan *wrestles* with us—we must rely wholly on the *spirit*—but you are not yet *called*. Alas! youth, beauty, birth, accomplishments, riches; what are these but traps laid by the *Devil* to ensnare us?—She was now come to the very point I wished her to arrive at. In the *fullest* extent I allow, Madam, the propriety of your most just observation; rank, fortune, title, may be called the *dress* of human happiness, the *refined* part is of quite a different nature. The lovely, amiable woman, continued I, of whom we have been speaking, is infinitely more distinguished by *refinements* than *birth* or *fortune*.

The

The better for herself, my Lord; it will make her turn her thoughts to *serious* matters. Oh! had you heard the Reverend Mr. Blank, as I have done on this subject, you would wonder how *vanity* could get the dominion over our poor souls; the case is *this*, we are blinded by *sin* till enlightened by *reformation*.——Your Ladyship's arguments carry conviction; there is not a crime so detestable in my eyes as the sin of *pride*; yet we sacrifice, in support of this pernicious passion, our most essential blessings. Miss Mildmay would at this moment, Madam, be the happiest as she is already the most deserving of her sex, but for the foolish

foolish customs of the world, whose modes are founded merely on vanity.—Explain yourself, my Lord.—Why *thus*, Madam; Miss Mildmay, the Lady whose picture you have seen, is partial to a young man of rank superior to her own, and the fear of disgracing him in the opinion of his *family*, withholds her from encouraging his ardent pursuits, though she knows he doats on her to distraction.

Why this energy, Castledown?
—She shook her head. The subject is interesting, and my heart is engaged in the felicity of *those* lovers. If they love, I would advise them by all means, my
VOL. IV. O Lord,

Lord, not to marry.—Is it possible this can be the advice of my mother?—Undoubtedly; that man or woman is undone who can draw his or her affection from *heavenly*, and place it upon *earthly* objects.—I thought, Madam, marriage had been a *divine* institution.—And you have not thought *wrong*; marriage was a divine institution, yet we are not commanded to indulge our passions to idolatry; grievously do we sin when we rob Heaven in the smallest degree of that transporting *fervent* love which should be all its own, and will not bear a division.—Did your Ladyship marry my father on this principle?—I was, when

when I married your father, the daughter of perdition; I am now *called* to a state of salvation; there can be no analogy between my *former* and *present* sentiments.— Give me leave, Madam, to ask you one question:—were not the endearing affections of nature implanted in our bosoms by the hand of our Maker? And do we, think you, render him service by endeavouring to root them from thence?—I have told you before, Castledown, I hate argument—I will not be puzzled; if you want information, apply to my chaplain.—Dear Madam, be not angry, I have done; and according to the light you *now* place

Matrimony to my view, I can see no reason why a man should ever marry at all.—Yes, there are many reasons; and it is your obstinacy only that prevents you from seeing them; in your own situation, marriage becomes a duty; you are the last of your family, and if you die without *heirs* the title is extinct.—Well then, Madam, since you allow this, I must inform you the man who loves Miss Mildmay is exactly in my predicament, and invincibly attached to her; but so great is her delicacy, so exemplary her honour, that he has no hopes of a union with her, but through the interposition of his mother.—She started and turned pale.—

pale.—I hope, my Lord, ———
 Dearest Madam, I will no longer
 dissemble; the very man now
 stands before you.—What! so-
 licit a *low-born* wretch—a woman
 whom you confess has not *even*
 fortune to recommend her—court
 such a one as *this* to be my daugh-
 ter! how dare you, Castledown,
 affront me by so presumptuous, so
 extravagant a proposal.

Her features as she spoke were
 distorted by resentment, and pas-
 sion threw its crimson mantle
 over every part that was visible
 of her person. It was no more
 than I expected; I was prepared
 for the storm, and stood undaunted,

O 3 whilst —

whilst my ears were saluted with a volley of reproaches, mingled with repeated commands to relinquish my designs, or banish myself her presence for ever. Words for a time came in great plenty to her assistance, but at last, utterance grew difficult, and tears succeeded. —Though I was not disconcerted at her rage, yet I could not witness unmoved a parent seemingly afflicted; I threw myself at her feet; I pleaded my cause with tender submission;—ineffectual my pleadings; I was told either to renounce Olivia, or expect her unremitting displeasure. I arose from my supplicating posture, and resolved to change the mode of my application.

application. At this critical moment the door opened, and in stalked her pious director; but he saw we were deeply engaged, and would have retired, had I not prevented him.—My mother's mind, said I, is discomposed; pray, sir, come forward; your company cannot be displeasing. The doctor bowed; full of important curiosity did as I requested, and looked very much at my service.—*My mother frowned*; ungracious son! do you mean to *expose* me?—I am particularly unhappy, Madam, that nothing I do can give you pleasure.—Mighty well, mighty well, my Lord, rising from her chair, and advancing towards the
 astonished

astonished priest, as my son has invited you to witness the distress into which he has plunged me, why should I conceal his undutiful behaviour? Why hide his *crime* from you?—Oh, Sir!—Oh, Doctor!———he has made me the most miserable of women—he threatens to bring a *beggar* into my family.

I took both her hands in mine, and respectfully seating her, insisted on her permitting me to lay open the circumstances of my situation, that I might not suffer in the world from prejudice and misrepresentation. She made an effort to silence me; I saw my
 advantage;

advantage; it was my last resource, and I was not to be silenced. After saying all I had to say, the Doctor declared himself on my side, and managed so dexterously, that though my mother gave me no reason to suppose her resolution was in the least weakened, yet I saw by the abatement of her passion, that in a short time he would mould her mind to receive whatever impressions were of consequence to my felicity; and I saw too, with additional pleasure, he meant not to be sparing of his influence in my favour.

I concealed this *new* reinforcement of hope as a *corps de reserve*,
and

and rising to take my leave, I moved towards my mother with a solemn, penfive, determined air. —Farewell, Madam, said I, you drive me from your presence; perhaps for ever.—I am master of my own actions, why lead me like an infant? I am passed the age of *controul*. Why will you not repay my obedience with tenderness? My affections are settled invariably; if you withhold your approbation another day, I leave England—a *country* in which I have experienced repeated opposition, the *last* of which must be fatal to my peace.—She was touched; the Doctor interposed; but I broke from them, and made my exit.

exit. I had not been at home more than two hours, every moment expecting a message to recall me, when my *Aid de Camp* rushed into my presence with the joyful tidings of having gained a complete victory. I do not want gratitude, and I thanked him for his friendly offices by a promise of the best preferment in my gift.

My mother had sent a message by him to request I would dine with her ; and, in consequence of my readiness to oblige her, she received me graciously, said she would soon see Miss Mildmay, and if she answered my description, would not only consent to our union,

union, but even become my advocate.

The certainty of calling Olivia my own, exhilarated my spirits; —the prospect of a good benefice had the *same* happy effect on the Doctor's, and I found his reverence no bad companion over a bottle; he is one of those who can be all things to all men.

My mother retiring soon after dinner, we drank our claret freely for half an hour, when I flew exulting to South-Audley-street, leaving the smug rosy-faced *saint* more than half a bishop.—The rest at my leisure.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXXI.

LADY MORPETH TO MRS. OSMOND.

South-Audley-Street.

EVER since I have experienced the comfortable blessing of a reconciliation to the bosoms of my dear affectionate parents, my ideas have been expanding, and my heart has unfolded itself to partake the felicity of others. How *new*, how delightful, are *such* impressions—every obstruction is removed to our Olivia's being the wife of Lord Castle-down; and my good-natured Lord (I love him the better for it) is intoxicated with pleasure; in *short*,

VOL. IV. P Madam,

Madam, we are altogether a family of rapture.—Olivia writes to you, but she will not, I dare say, be one quarter part so descriptive as I am inclined to be.—Modesty is a bar her vanity will never be able to get over;—she will tell you she is happy, but she will not tell you with what grace, with what enchanting sweetness, she ratified the happiness of her generous lover.—I go but little abroad, as my situation makes every kind of fatigue disagreeable; and I now begin to find *home* not only supportable, but pleasant.

The other evening as Olivia and I were employed at our frames,
Lord

Lord Morpeth entertaining us with one of Shakespeare's plays, Lord Castledown stole upon us. We are so used to expect him, he is so *much* a family man in our house, that my Lord, who was got into one of the long speeches in King John, did not lay aside his book when he entered; for my part, it was by mere accident that I took my eyes from my work, and casually looking towards him, I saw in a moment that his countenance was animated with an unusual degree of vivacity. —He placed himself behind Olivia, and he leant over the back of her chair; his attitude was that of attention, but his *attention* was

P. 2

fixed

fixed on the beautiful hands and arms of his mistress, not on the excellencies of Shakespeare, or the creation which sprung beneath the snowy fingers of Olivia. She had not seen his Lordship's approach with indifference; the pleasure that sparkled in his eyes was transfused to her own—she has *all* the modesty in the world, but not a grain of affectation.—How penetrating was the smiling look she gave him; her elegant neck never appeared to *such* advantage as in the attitude of turning half round to convey him so sweet a glance, as I saw sunk to his very soul.—He snatched her unreluctant hand, and pressing it
fervently

fervently to his bosom:—My dearest, dear creature, he exclaimed in a voice of transport, my mother consents to our union—can you longer hesitate?

The suddenness of this address filled us all with astonishment.—His mother consent to their union! —I protest I thought him *mad*; my Lord dropped his book, started from his chair, and stood staring at him as if he was of the *same* opinion. To describe the emotions of Olivia is impossible.—Aurora's blush has been often celebrated by the Poets, but *Aurora*, in her gayest colouring, never blushed like *Olivia*; her blush, at

that moment, expressed all that can be imagined of love, joy, gratitude, and surprise; I may call it my first interview with *those* passions; I never before supposed it possible they could be so exquisitely expressive. I have not been much disposed to observations of this nature; I begin to think there is a greater charm in sensibility than even in beauty itself; yet it is a constitutional advantage, and I am *now* assured from experience, how possible it is to *admire* without *possessing* it.——Speak, my angel, my life, continued the transported lover, speak, and tell me I am not the object of your aversion.——Hold, Castledown, cried

cried my good man interposing, Olivia shall not speak; she shall not even look at you, till you convince me what you tell us of your mother is not all a dream; prove the reality; and as the most deserving man in the world, I will venture to promise for Olivia's heart that it shall be all your own.

—You bribe high, my Lord; but I will owe *all* to love and my Olivia; my mother will see you to-morrow; are you disposed, my angel, to receive her visit?—I had taken her hand in mine; it was cold as death; her delicate frame could not support the tide of joy by which she was overwhelmed, she could only bow a
silent

silent assent to his question; her eyes filled with tears, she arose to conceal them, and pressing my hand, whispered—dear Lady Morpeth, suffer me to retire; I am the weakest of all human beings. In a moment, Lord Castledown was at her feet—why, why these tears, my beloved? you must not leave me; you are superior to affectation. Are they the tears of compassion? Do they flow from regret that you cannot command your inclinations to reward a passion so strongly interwoven with my existence, as to render *them* inseparable?—I now really feared she would have fainted;—her tears and silence had certainly filled

filled him with alarming apprehensions.—I am quite ashamed, said she, with having exposed myself; I must either declare what will cover me with confusion, or I must give Lord Castledown reason to *suppose* me ungrateful.—Dearest, best of women, honour me with your real sentiments, and fear not that I will take advantage of your goodness; the condition to which I have seen you reduced, has afflicted me beyond measure; I would not again suffer such torments for the universe.—I meant not, my Lord, to afflict you; I could not restrain my tears, they were not the tears of regret—have I said enough? and a
crimson

crimson blush dyed her expressive countenance. — One word *more*, and I will not further distress my angel ;—will you consent to see my mother as the prelude to my happiness ? — You leave me no choice, my Lord ; your disinterested tenderness has a claim to my obedience. — The affection, the candour of *this* declaration, delivered with a sweetness and dignity not to be equalled, completed his joy ;—and Lord Morpeth, who doats on Olivia, was half frantick ; I hardly know that he has yet recovered his right senses.

Lady Castledown came the next morning ; she behaved with
a great

a great deal of polite civility to her daughter elect (who was quite enchanting) she could not help being pleased with her; yet when first she was presented, I read in her countenance with what reluctance she had consented to her son's importunities.—Olivia acquitted herself with so much grace, gentleness, and respect, as could not be resisted; they produced a miracle, and fascinated her Ladyship so effectually, that she not only desired to see her often, but hoped she would not lengthen out the time of her son's probation by unnecessary delays.—He snatched his mother's hand, which he pressed

pressed to his lips—the eyes of Olivia sent out their dove-like harbingers to express her grateful feelings, whilst she assured Lady Castledown the affection, which it was now permitted her to declare for the most deserving of men, and the perfect submission she owed her Ladyship, would never suffer her to dispute the commands of *either*.

When this pretty scene passed, his mother was in the attitude of taking leave; so I shall say no more of her visit, as at this time I wish to avoid every thing uninteresting to my subject. The great point gained, other material matters are

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now set on foot ; my happy, good-natured Lord is consulted on the settlements, &c. and is of consequence in a most important bustle ; the lawyers will not want a *spur* to expedite their part of the business ; but Olivia declares the *grand* event cannot take place without your presence, and that of my dear father—come then, I beseech you both, as soon as possible—my sister Edgerton will in all probability meet you in town ;—consider how *many* inducements there are to draw you hither, and let not the situation of your Emily be omitted in the number.

182 COUNT DE POLAND.

L E T T E R XXXII.

LORD CASTLEDOWN TO SIR JAMES SEATON.

Hill-Street.

PHilosophers tell us the mutability of human nature admits not of realities, that death is the *only* certainty on which we can depend, that happiness is a phantom we *often* glimpse at, but *never* overtake.

When Olivia, glowing with sensibility, promised to be mine, I gave the lie to those philosophical assertions;—happiness was then my own; I had it in actual possession; but when I thought myself

myself most secure, it seemed to be taking wing, it eluded my eager grasp, and I expected to have lost sight of it for ever.—This morning it again hovers in my view; it looks with a smiling aspect—my Olivia is out of danger—my Olivia will now recover.—What I have gone through since I last wrote you, what I have suffered within these three days, as much surpasses the torments of the rack, as the *mind* does the *body* in susceptibility of *pain* and *pleasure*.

Monday we spent the day at my mother's;—my *divinity* was all soul, no appearance of morta-

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lity

lity in her composition, and my passion bordered on idolatry.—She looked, she spoke, she smiled; I saw, I heard, I worshipped. Why has she deceived me? why given me an incontestible proof that she is mortal? I cannot support the thought of her being subject to dissolution; when I am her husband, with what caution, with what anxiety, shall I guard her tender frame from every blast, lest it should rudely breathe on her the air of pestilential vapour. How did I beg, how did I intreat her to draw up the side glass on our return from St. James's-square; Lady Morpeth is apt to be affected by a confined situation, and

and yet she joined her intreaties to mine ; but our persuasions were to no purpose.—The evening was not remarkably severe, but my dearest had only a thin lace cloak thrown over her shoulders—what business have such women with *ornaments*? Beauty like her's can receive no advantage from them ; —for the future, I shall hate every part of a female dress, that is not, in some degree, instrumental to her preservation.—I took every precaution in my power ; I insisted on tying a handkerchief about her neck ; yet, notwithstanding all my care, the next morning, when I came to South-Audley-street, I found her ex-

Q 3

ceedingly

ceedingly indisposed ; she would not make the *worst* of her complaint, which she called a slight cold ; but soon after dinner she was so ill, that Lady Morpeth prevailed on her to retire, and the physician, which was immediately sent for, threw me into all the horrors of despair, by pronouncing her disorder a putrid sore throat, attended with dangerous symptoms.

From that moment to this blessed day, on which her sentence is reversed, I can give you no account of myself ; I have been in a state of distraction or stupefaction the whole time.—

Laft

Last night I threw off my cloaths, which, till then, I had never taken from my back.—Doctor P——n assured me my treasure was quite out of danger, and I slept soundly.—Before I had this comfortable cordial of *hope* administered, day and night succeeded to each other without my being scarcely able to distinguish one from the other.—Sunshine and darkness are alike insupportable to the wretched. Her fever ran so amazingly high, that for twelve hours the *clearest* reason, the *strongest* judgment, that ever enlightened mortality, was in a state of obscurity; yet in her delirium, there was more the appearance

pearance of *reason* and *judgement*, than is to be discovered in half the fashionable circles about town.

Lady Morpeth, though advised to be more cautious, attended her with all the tenderness of a sister.—How is my *angel* adored in this family!—the lowest domestic in it seemed under the same cloud of affliction with their superiors.—A profound silence was observed through the house, and every countenance spoke agitation. I was never further from the object of my soul's attention, than the room next her own.—Morpeth was the partner of my melancholy hours; and his distress could only be

be exceeded by *what I felt*.—I watched the Countess's coming out and going in to implore her compassion;—the agonies with which I pleaded for admission, she did not always resist.—The price I paid for those short interviews, another man might blush to acknowledge, whilst I glory in confessing the thousand—thousand tears I shed for my *Olivia*. I have been so used to stalk about like a ghost, and to speak in whispers, that with me stalking and whispering is almost grown into a habit.—When I went to my chamber last night, it was on the tips of my toes, and this morning, I caught myself giving orders

ders to my servant in a voice scarcely distinguishable.

By permission of her physician, she is to sit up for half an hour this morning.—Lady Morpeth is to give me notice when she is disposed to receive me; my going home and sleeping till then, was one of the conditions on which I am to be gratified with the sweetest of *all* gratifications.—I have not been able to fulfil my engagement with exactness—I have been up ever since five, and find from experience that grief and joy are equally the enemies of repose.—My visit must be short; only one half hour—those physicians are
hard-

hard-hearted creatures;—I suppose they never were in love—one poor half hour !

I remember formerly to have mentioned to you an unfortunate quarrel than subsisted between my friend, the Duke *de Oboyne*, and his brother, the Count *de Poland*; I have just heard from the former; they are both coming to England.—They have discovered a niece, the loss of whom occasioned the breach between them, and a reconciliation has taken place.

The Duke writes in raptures of *Mademoiselle de Poland*.—New-
ton

ton pities me for having so *hastily* disposed of my heart, and honours me with the compliment of saying, if I could *decently* recall it, there is not a man in the world whose alliance he should hold in competition with mine.—I long to see the Duke; I long to shew him my Olivia, to convince him I am not an object of *pity*, and that all the *Mademoiselles* in the world could not draw my attention one single moment from the beloved of my heart, much less move a link of that sacred chain which so firmly rivets my affection.—The *Duke* and *Count* are coming over with Sir William and Lady Edgerton; I wonder if they
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bring their *Mademoiselle* with them ;—the heiress of so princely a house will not want a husband ; if such be their design, perhaps I am the *only* man they could have miss marked for their purpose.

I love the Duke, and *admire* the Count's character ; but was their *de Poland* celestial, and had I never got more than a momentary glance of my *Olivia*, I would have refused the title of their nephew.—A note from Lady *Morpeth* !—My *Olivia* is got up ; she bears the fatigue beyond expectation.—Farewell ! I go ; I fly ; my impatience will add another *spur* to the *heel* of expedition.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

NEVER again let a man depend on his *wisdom*, his *discernment*, or his *resolution*; never say I will do *thus* or *thus*; propose to act *so* or *so*;—in vain he proposes; he is insufficient to determine;—Fate disposes of him, and his actions are governed by an *over-ruling Providence*.

I told you a week ago, at which time I would have sworn it *too*, that the Duke *de Oboyne*, with all his possessions added to those of his brother the Count, could not
bribe

bribe me to cast *one* look but of indifference on a female of their family.—I said in the foolishness of my heart, how infinitely inferior must be their *niece* to my adorable *Olivia*!—I have seen this celebrated—Heavens, how justly celebrated *Mademoiselle de Poland*—I omit the name of *Newton*, as I know her uncle's wish to have her only distinguished by the former.—I have seen her; I am convinced of my error; and pronounce her by far the *most* beautiful, the *most* admirable of *all* women.—I love her passionately! I love her, if possible, with more fervency than I have ever loved before.

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The Duke and Count are transported at the effect her charms have produced ; nor is she averse to my happiness ; she scruples not to confess, that from the first moment she saw me, I was not beheld with disfavour. You see me still in the road to matrimony, though not *quite* so near the goal I once imagined ; I have a more round-about-way to pursue, but sure of reaching it at the last.—

Olivia's settlements were very near concluded ; I had not been ungenerous, (they were the same with my mother's) and her friends approved *them*.—The case is now altered ; I am to receive with my charming *de Poland* eighty thousand

and pounds! fifty from the Duke, thirty from the Count, besides double that vast sum at their deaths! They are the richest family in France, and are lavish to the *heirefs* of their house. — Circumstances, such as these, must be considered, and will take up more time in adjusting, *much* more than I am willing to allow.

The gentlemen of the robe have got fresh instructions; I will harrafs them to death if they are not diligent; already I have given them to understand by what means they might secure my *solid* acknowledgments. — Prithee do not fly out; for though I am determined.

mined to marry Mademoiselle de
Poland,—though I find it im-
 possible to resist her various at-
 tractions,—yet I promise you *Oli-
 via* shall have no reason to com-
 plain.—She shall know me for the
 tenderest, the most affectionate of
 her friends;—her happiness shall
 be dearer to me than my own;—I
 will study her ease, her felicity,
 in every future step of my life;
 but, after all I can do, poorly
 shall I be able to express the un-
 utterable sense I preserve of her
 goodness, and the sublimity of
 that passion with which she has
 honoured me. She sees—yes, she
 cannot avoid seeing, how *much* I
 adore *Mademoiselle de Poland*; she
 knows

knows my determination to close with the Duke's proposals; in short, that my destiny depends on a union with his niece.—

Olivia sees, Olivia knows all this; yet *Olivia* is not the enemy of *Mademoiselle de Poland*; she yields to my pleasure with a condescension the most engaging; I have not even perceived a frown upon her face; I press her lovely hand; I swear to her that she could not have found another rival in the whole creation;—she tells me smiling, she will not oppose whatever can promote my felicity.—

Now, as she so generally acquits, who shall *dare* condemn my conduct? To convince you by what
irresistible

irresistible force temptations assaulted me before I could be brought to accept the best favour *Fortune* could bestow;—to convince you it was not in the power of mortal to refuse this favour;—I find myself under the necessity of being circumstantial.

Not a moment have I to throw away upon any man or woman in the universe, whilst my *de Poland* is visible; but when she retires to her chamber, my day closes, and gloom succeeds the brightness of her presence; it is then I am at your devotion; it is then I shall feel something like transport in retracing with my pen every incident

incident of which my memory has received such impressions as *time* itself will not be able to obliterate.——Expect that my letters will resemble the patch-work in your grandmother's dressing-room, to spin a regular web; I have not leisure—I shall begin and end as it happens to suit my convenience; I only desire where the thread snaps you will endeavour to join it; and if you perform this task with tolerable clearness, I shall not hold you the most disingenuous of ingenious undertakers.

CONTINUATION.

I enter on my defence—*Olivia* is charming; my heart has long
 confessed

confessed how infinitely charming!—*Mademoiselle de Poland* is not *less* lovely; my heart also signs to the testimonial of her power.—The nicest eye cannot behold the one in a light disadvantageous to the other; or the nicest judgment decide which is most distinguishable on the list of mental excellencies;—if I have loved one with rapture, I feel, if possible, for the other an increase of passion.

The scale is now poised; keep it steady for a moment, and, when I have thrown in a few inferior considerations, observe with candour to which side the balance is inclined.

inclined. *Olivia*, in giving me herself, had no *douceurs* of rank, riches, alliance, to make her gift respectable in the contracted sight of avarice; yet, small as it was, had I never known *Mademoiselle de Poland*, to me it would have been of *more* worth than diadems.—I felt a joy so pure, so sweet, so lively, in being the friend of her unprotected *virtues*, of raising *their* blushing heads from obscurity, and placing them in the view of admiration; I felt pleasures so unmixed, that I cannot even now relinquish it without a degree of reluctance, without almost wishing I had never heard the name of *Mademoiselle de Poland*. One half
of

of mankind will ridicule this opinion ; but the choice I have made may probably restore me to their *good* graces.—The *other* half, that is, such men as my friend, will require no explanation of a mystery, mysterious only to the narrow conception of hood-winked selfishness. You have some cause, I confess, to accuse me of duplicity, by opposing my *practice* to the *theory* I advance ; perhaps you will tell me that a man who preaches the doctrine of disinterested love, whilst he acts in direct opposition to his own precepts, is a *mere* babbler, and should gain no credit from his hearers.—By no means am I acting in
opposition

opposition to my doctrine, if I did not love *Mademoiselle de Poland*, independent of *lucrative* inducements; if I could not give her the tenderest preference to all other women, I would *die* rather than marry her.—I *have* been the slave of *Olivia*; I am *now* the slave of *de Poland*; the former would have made me blessed; the latter will *equally* bless me;—she brings me birth, riches, alliance, and let me add friendship, to which her uncles have bound me by the strongest ties of obligation.

The Duke *de Oboyne* has long been my friend; I know less of the Count *de Poland*, but enough

to convince me that *his* is the most finished character human nature ever produced.—I now permit you to decide whether I am right or wrong in my proceedings ; but whatever may be your decision, my fate is already determined.—Next Thursday se'ennight, if the confounded lawyers are not dilatory beyond pardon, *Mademoiselle de Poland* will be *Countess of Castledown*.

RECAPITULATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

Not a hundred years ago, as I was sitting by the side of *Olivia*, between the hours of two and three in the afternoon, 'Lady *Morpeth* came into the room, and
 putting

putting into my hand an open note, said, In *this*, my Lord, we are equally concerned.—Read, and prepare to answer it in person ; I obeyed the *first* part of her command, and these are the contents.

N O T E.

‘ Sir William and myself are,
 ‘ my dear Lady Morpeth, just set
 ‘ down horridly fatigued at our
 ‘ own door ;—impatient to embrace you and your good Lord,
 ‘ we intreat you both to come to
 ‘ us at dinner—bring *Olivia* with
 ‘ you, she is exceedingly dear to
 ‘ us all.—Sir William is sending
 ‘ a message to Lord Castledown ;
 ‘ —I have a *presentiment*, it will

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be

‘ be more likely to find him at
 ‘ your house than his own ;—if he
 ‘ falls in your way, prevail on
 ‘ him to honour us with his com-
 ‘ pany. *H. Edgerton.*’

I told Lady Morpeth she must go without me; that since *Olivia*’s health made it impossible for her to be of the party, I would not leave her to dine alone.—Her Ladyship replied, that my motive for refusing the invitation was so good as not to admit of dispute; and, added she with a smile, I will undertake to make your peace with my sister.—*Olivia* opposed my intention with so much eagerness, that after all my arguments
 were

were exhausted, I was obliged to submit, and promise to oblige Lady Morpeth. This submission demanded a reward, and she rewarded it by permitting me to return to her after dinner. She had not yet left her dressing-room since her illness, but she now told me, that finding her strength quite recovered, I should, when I came back, find her below stairs.—I asked Lady Morpeth if it was her opinion that such a step might be taken with safety; and she assuring me there could be no hazard, I consented to the changing her apartment, giving a thousand charges to wrap herself up with great caution; but, above

all, to avoid a *thin cloak* as she valued my peace, which had already suffered a too dreadful interruption from the consequences of that fatal ornament.—She looked her thanks, and promised to obey my instructions; never was she dearer to my heart than at the instant I tore myself from her.—I harboured not a thought of *Mademoiselle de Poland*; had an angel from Heaven told me that in the space of four hours, I should feel the same tender sensations for the *niece* of my friend, I must have believed him an impostor;—I could not have supposed him a messenger from the holy regions of Truth; yet what
I should

I should have discredited from *super-natural* attestation, experience compelled me to acknowledge. —I accompanied Lord and Lady Morpeth to Sir William Edgerton's, and found *there* the Duke *de Oboyne* and his brother; I need not tell you our reception was warm, affectionate, and joyful; there are not *now*, in my opinion, two more comfortable or more amiable families than Morpeth's and Edgerton's. The Duke presented me to his brother; you already know my sentiments of this extraordinary man; were I to *speak* as often as I *think* of his worth, the subject would be endless.

The

The pleasure of meeting our friends, after a short separation, gives a *zest* to all other enjoyments;—we sat down to table, disposed for chearful sociality; mirth and good-humour waited on our *repast*—I asked the Count, just as we were taking our places, (it was a question of *mere* curiosity) I asked him if we should not be honoured with the company of *Mademoiselle de Poland*.——Ah, my Lord! he replied; my present happiness wants but that *one* addition; she cannot pay you her respects on *this* occasion; on some future visit I hope we shall be *more* fortunate.—I concluded she was indisposed; and, not to appear

pear particularly interested about her, dropped my inquiries. The Ladies did not retire early from table; my heart was with *Olivia* the whole time; *their* presence was a restraint upon my motions; inclination pulled one way, politeness drew another; I was uneasy between both; I knew not how to decide so as to offend neither.—Lady Morpeth pitied my situation; she saw me apply to my watch, and smiled with as much intelligence as if she had said, I understand your impatience; immediately she proposed to withdraw.—I blessed her considerate goodness, and seized the precious opportunity. My chariot had been
been

been waiting more than an hour; I blundered out an apology to Sir William, and was making my exit with all imaginable haste, when at *this* critical moment, the Duke, who had attended the Ladies to the door of their apartment, returned. He laid his hand on my shoulder; where are you going, Castledown?—To keep an appointment, my Lord, that I would not neglect for the universe.—Then it *must* be with a Lady?—I will tell you to-morrow if you do not detain me *now*.—To-morrow will *not* do; I am impatient to see your charmer; you must take *me* with you on conditions.—Name your conditions.—

ditions.—You must sit in the chariot till I know if the Lady I am going to visit is inclined to receive the honour you propose doing her.—She has been extremely ill; the presence of a stranger may incommode her.—A mere trifle; what other condition?—That if the Duke *de Oboyne* is refused admission, he exculpates me from having any share in his disappointment.—Agreed, my Lord! agreed, agreed. He sprung forwards, rushed into my carriage, I followed, and away we drove.

CONTINUATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

Take the conversation in our way to South-Audley-street.—
Castledown,

Castledown, are you serious in your attachment? Do you *really* intend to marry the Lady to whom we are going?—So firmly I intend it, my dear Duke, that all earthly powers united could not shake my resolution.—I am sorry for it!—Suspend your judgement, my Lord, till you are admitted to the presence of my angel.—*Angels* are very scarce *beings*; I never knew but *one*, and *that* one Lord Castledown might have secured to himself.—I never knew but *one*, and *that* one I have secured to myself.—Come, come, I have loved you like my own son; you cannot be that relation; but there is another connection which,
if

if you are *not* obstinate, is *yet* attainable.—I make no doubt but your fair one surpasses the *common* run of women, but a *less* valuable husband, I suppose, might content her; I will marry her myself rather than you shall not be at liberty.—I laughed at his pleasantry; it was impossible to be angry.—I swear by Heaven, Castledown! if I do not think her almost equal to our *de Poland*, she shall not be *your* wife.—Rest it there, my Lord; but who is to be the judge?—Not you, my friend; a blind man may better distinguish colours, than a lover the imperfections of his mistress.—Nor you, Duke; an umpire,

VOL. IV. T whose

whose judgment is biased by partiality, ought not to be trusted with the *weights* of justice; appoint an unprejudiced man to settle our debate, and I will venture my last hundred on his sentence.

You raise my curiosity to a painful height; now should she refuse to gratify it, I shall repent your indulgence in bringing me to her door. You shall run no risque in being refused; *my* vanity is concerned in your conviction—I will present you, my Lord, without the ceremony of asking leave; a denial would now equally torment us both.—The carriage
stopped;

stopped ; we got out, and ascended the steps together. Before I proceed, take in this place the description of *Olivia*, such as she appeared to the astonished senses of my friend ; in any other part of my narrative, the short sketch I shall give you would interfere with more essential business.— You are to suppose nothing about the introduction, till I think proper to make you an *ideal* witness our reception ; at *present*, you are to turn your *mental* eye on *Olivia*, and on *Olivia only*.

Lady Morpeth's drawing-room is hung and furnished with green ; on a sofa of this becoming colour

T 2 rested

rested the delicate frame of my enchantress ;—her attitude was not one of those in which a painter would chuse to exhibit the portrait of a *languishing* beauty ; but had he been inclined to blend the loveliness of a *Venus* with the chaste dignity of a *Diana*, what a hint for the execution of his pencil ! One polished cheek reclined on a pillow, supported by an arm of the sofa, added, to the graces of exact propriety, the charm of negligence ; her posture was that of ease, not of indolence. —Sickness had left the traces of its palid finger on her animated countenance ; but a robe of pale pink sattin threw a faint bloom

over

over the cheek that was visible—
 a bloom *more* suited to the soft-
 ness of her appearance than the
 fuller glow of health, which in
other situations so exceedingly be-
 comes her.—Altogether, suppose
 her figure the *most* interesting that
 can be described, felt, or ima-
 gined.—I have done with rap-
 tures ;—admire you not with what
coolness I can speak of beauties so
 exquisite ? Is my pen, think you,
 dictated by passion ?—No, no, I
 reserve all my *raptures* for *Made-
 moiselle de Poland*.—Candour alone
 obliges me to do justice to the
 charms of *Olivia*.—Why will
 not the female world copy from
Olivia ? Why cannot they speak,

T 3

act,

act, and dress like her? to *look* like her I know is impossible; but their manners—a refinement in them—is that so difficult?—Well, I have found them out a model; it is not my fault if they are incorrigible. I am in raptures with the form of *Olivia's* robe; and resolve, when the lovely *de Poland* is my own, she shall never wear any thing else of a morning.—Oh, *Olivia! Olivia!* I shall never be the husband of *Olivia*, nor shall I ever cease to adore her.

CONTINUATION.

I brought you to the door—I did *more*; I gave you a peep thro' the key-hole, and you have seen the

the *Phœnix*, destined to convince the Duke, that *my Olivia* could not be surpassed by *his de Poland*.

—My hand trembles; I am at a loss to paint the scene; take it then as I can give it, incoherent, *perhaps* unintelligible.—— First, read the inclosed; it is the History of *the Count and Mademoiselle de Poland*, presented me by *Mrs. Osmond*.

Continuation of Circumstances why I should marry Mademoiselle de Poland, and not Olivia.

I am just come from my angel; my hand less unsteady; the cordial of her presence operates on my spirits, and I shall be able to
indulge

indulge you with half an hour before she comes from her toilet. In the attitude and elegant *dishabille* I have endeavoured to describe—*Olivia* struck us at our entrance ; I say *us*, for I was dazzled by her inimitable figure, as if this had been my *first* interview with the *soul* of beauty. The sofa on which she reclined fronted us ; I chose to go in without being announced ; she had a book in her hand, and did not observe when the door opened. My best love, (said I, approaching her) I have brought the *dearest* of my friends to visit you : she started at the sound of my voice, and gracefully arose to receive us.—The

Duke

Duke de — I had not time to pronounce his name;—their eyes met; great God! exclaimed the Duke, his arms extended, what, what do I see? at the same instant, *Olivia*, with a scream of terror, sunk down breathless on the floor.—I flew towards her, but she was already in the Duke's embraces.—Shall I confess my folly? Shall I tell you I did not behold her emotions with calmness, or the Duke's unaccountable familiarity, without being alarmed by sensations I now blush to recollect? I strove to snatch her from him; she was not quite insensible, and held out her hand, as if to intreat my protection; he
would

would not quit her, but appeared totally unaffected at my rudeness. —My dearest child, cried he, my beloved *Annanette*.—He was going on; the sound of his voice effectually roused her, and breaking from his arms, her bashful face glowing like crimson, she *thus* interrupted him.—Leave me, leave me, my Lord; dare you insult me in the presence of Lord *Castledown*, who honours me with his affection?—I pressed the dear, trembling, apprehensive *innocent* to my bosom;—my life! my soul! my *Olivia*! be composed. The name of *Annanette*, by which the Duke has addressed you, makes me penetrate this *seeming* mystery—
you

you have been imposed on, my angel; I swear to you the Duke is not to blame; he never harboured a thought destructive to that heavenly purity for which I adore you.—As I said this, her trembling increased; the blush of terror and resentment, which had passed over her fair face, suddenly gave way to the pale hue of death; she panted for breath; her eyes closed; a sigh forced itself from her, that, like the stroke of a poignard, entered my heart, and made me rave for assistance.—The Duke, afflicted at the effects his presence had produced, was retired at a little distance till her fears should be abated; he watched her

her movements; he saw, as he supposed, the approach of death; his constraint vanished, and he mingled his cries with mine.—Our screams brought about us a multitude of male and female attendants; but I beckoned them all to retire except Lady Morpeth's woman, who assisted our endeavours, which at last proved effectual; the tide of life flowed gently through its transparent channels, and with it brought back our tranquility.—Her Ladyship's servant withdrew; and *Olivia*, now looking round her, cast at the Duke a placid glance, devoid of apprehension, seeming to recollect what I had said in his vindication.

vindication. I held one of her hands, and she did not repulse the Duke when he laid hold of the other.—This, said he, my dearest *Annanette*; this is the second time you have unintentionably distressed me; you flew from my paternal guardianship, and now that I have found you, my presence reduces you to a state bordering on death; listen to my defence with patience; it is not a *lover*, it is your tender, your affectionate *uncle*, who invokes you. —My uncle! the Duke *de Oboyne* my uncle!—I will not be deceived—no, no, my Lord, it is impossible that you should be *my* uncle.

VOL. IV.

U

Her

Her violent agitation threatened a relapse.—O ! how I cursed my imprudence in bringing him with me. A discovery so important should have been made with the greatest circumspection; yet who could have imagined, who could have dreamt, that in *my* gentle *Olivia* he should discover, he should find *his* divine *de Poland*.—I threw myself at her feet—Loveliest, *most* delicate, *most* prudent of women, hear, I beseech you; hear with calmness the wonders your uncle has to relate; he is your *uncle*; he is the friend of your Castledown.—Rise, rise, my dear Lord, (and she stretched out her hand) my reason is tottering

ing

ing on its foundation; I cannot disbelieve, yet how *can* I credit a paradox so astonishing, that *Annanette*, the daughter of honest, but obscure parents, should be *niece* to the Duke *de Oboyne*?—

You are *neither*, my dear child, replied the Duke with energy, you are neither *Annanette* or the daughter of obscure parents, your mother was my sister, my *ill-treated*, my *regretted*, my *beloved* sister.—And did you know of this connection, my Lord, at the time?—She stopped; she looked down; a modest shade, deeper than the tint of full-blown roses, flushed upon her cheeks.—Spare your question, my beloved child;

I adore your delicacy; I see by your confusion to what point it leads you.—No, my love, when I courted you for my wife, I call heaven to witness, I was uninformed as yourself of the insurmountable bar Providence had placed between us; I always imagined *Arlington* was your *real* mother.—Good God! I am not then *her* daughter; you tell me I am *your* niece!—*Think* that I *am* your uncle; *know* me for your *paternal* uncle; and that I never entertained an idea injurious to your honour.—She dropped; the angel dropped on her knees before him—Now, *now* is the Duke *de Oboyne* intitled to my duty, my
veneration,

veneration, my obedience; will he forgive the errors which imposition blinded me to commit?—He raised and embraced her;—I can scarcely, said he with an air of pleasantry, pardon *Annanette* for flying my house at the artful instigations of a vile incendiary; I can scarcely pardon *Olivia* for the unkindness with which she received me; but the virtues of my *de Poland* reconcile both to my affections.—*De Poland!* echoed she.—Yes, my love, you are no longer *Annanette Arlington*, but *de Poland Newton*.—Am I then a *de Poland*? Oh, my Lord! with *what* emotions of gratitude, of love, of respect, does my soul rise

to meet that *dear*, that *revered* name? Did he too—did that blessed *saint* know that I was the unfortunate daughter of his sister? —At the name of *de Poland* her eyes filled, and tears burst from them in a torrent as she asked this question. I was moved beyond expression; I caught her in my arms, and would not allow the Duke to convey to her heart the sounds of exulting happiness.—That mortal, who had first told her the Count was living, would have been the object of my unconquerable envy. By a look I asked his permission to take on myself the delightful office, and by the same silent language he returned
a gracious

a gracious assent. I had seen the effects of a *too* sudden surprize, which put me on my guard; and I administered the cordial drop by drop.—Without this precaution, we should have been *all* undone;—she must have sunk under the weight of joy, which, notwithstanding all my prudent measures, she was barely able to support. How lively, how exquisite her transports, when assured of the Count's being not only alive, but that I had also dined with him that very day at Sir William Edgerton's.—She wept; she smiled; she lifted up her hands; she returned thanks to heaven in a frantick kind of extasy; she would have

have flown to throw herself at his feet, and her tears redoubled by the methods we used to restrain her. She had not been in the air since her illness; to have ventured her abroad at that time of the evening, would have been madness; but our dissuasions were all in vain; we were at last obliged to place her on the sofa, and keep her a prisoner between us.—When the force of her agitations was a little spent, so that I could leave her with any degree of comfort, I slid out of the room without dropping a word of my design, giving her in charge to the Duke by a look which he perfectly understood. My own chariot was
not

not in waiting; I stepped into a hackney coach, and drove to Sir William Edgerton's.

CONTINUATION.

When the *Duke de Oboyne* wrote me of the reconciliation that had taken place with his brother, had he mentioned the circumstance of his niece being sheltered in England, I should not have been surprised at his finding her in the person of *Olivia*; but this explanation he omitted. I knew the History of *Annanette*; I knew she had flown from his protection, and the troubles her flight had occasioned; every particular of this nature, I received from himself
when

when I was last at *Paris*, and the amazing discovery his brother had made to him, that her real name was *de Poland*, and that she was the daughter of their only sister, he afterwards communicated to me by letter. How flattering to my vanity the compliment with which his last was concluded, how flattering *now* to my passion—the *former* consideration I disregarded; by the *latter*, my felicity is augmented.—Thursday se'ennight! what an age shall I think it to Thursday se'ennight!

CONTINUATION.

It was about nine when I got to Sir William Edgerton's; and
before

before I ascended to the drawing-room, I directed the servants in waiting to get up Lady Morpeth's carriage with all possible expedition. I took it for granted the whole party would return with me to South-Audley-street, which made me collect my senses enough to give those directions, that nothing might retard my impatience to carry back to my beloved that happiness her heart panted to receive.—The two Ladies, the Count, and Lord Morpeth, were at cards; Sir William looking on and seeing me enter alone, they all with one voice enquired what I had done with the Duke?—He is engaged, I replied, a thousand times

times more agreeably than yourselves;—I have often wondered what pleasure this painted *trash* can convey by its touch (taking up one of the packs which I shuffled, hardly knowing what I said or what I did).—*Nonsense*, cried Lady Morpeth, pushing me aside, clubs are trumps; you are the *most* unfashionable man in the universe—Clubs are trumps, my Lord, turning to the Count.—Don't talk, said I, of *clubs*; my thoughts are running upon *hearts*.—Why did you leave *Olivia* then so early?—I will punish you for that *inuendo*.—Your Ladyship shall lose your *sans-prendre*.—I defy you, my Lord;—will none of you
hear

hear me, good people? Clubs are trumps—lose my *sans-prendre*! impossible—six trumps, five matadores, and a king.—You lose it notwithstanding, and I mixed her cards with the pack I held in my hand.—A laugh succeeded, in which she joined with all the good-humour imaginable.—I knew your Ladyship would not be angry.—But I am angry, and will tell *Olivia*.—Deal again, Lord Morpeth.—First, my dear, let us hear what *Castledown* has to say; don't you see he is brimful of something?—Ridiculous—yes, I know he is brimful of mischief.—And so your Ladyship will expose me to *Olivia*?—Most certainly.—Come

away then, Madam, do not threaten, but perform.—A servant entered—your Ladyship's carriage.—This is unkind, sister, said Lady Edgerton.—Sir William and the Count looked surprised, it being before determined they were all to sup together.—Is the carriage here by your orders, my Lord, asked the Countess?—Not by my orders positively, replied Morpeth.—Well then, continued she, this mistake is monstrously ridiculous; surely the servants are mad.—I believe not, Madam; nor is there *any* mistake; I had the honour to deliver your Ladyship's commands for the carriage.—I hope you will confess that you had also the *bo-*

nour

nour of *forging* those commands.—
My crime cannot be called *actual*
forgery, I only took the liberty of
preceding your orders by a few
moments; I foresaw you would
sup at home with all this com-
pany, and provided against *delays*.

—There is something *more* than
humour in all this, said Lord
Morpeth; let us into your confi-
dence; convince us it is neces-
sary we should change the system
of our plan, and we will sup here
or at home; you shall conduct us
as you think proper.—But will
Lady Morpeth, Lady Edgerton,
Sir William, and the Count, con-
sent to your proposal?—Yes, all,
all, they replied.—Well then, I

will tell you, my Lord, your conjectures are not groundless; I am not acting from the *mere* wantonness of mirth; the spirits in which you see me return to you proceed from a real augmentation of heartfelt happiness; I admit *no* sentiment of that nature with which *Olivia* is not connected, and in the occasion of my present joy, she is more *particularly* concerned than I am; she is acknowledged by a family of rank more distinguished than my own, and of virtues infinitely superior to their nobility.—One of those generous, tender relations, who has but just made himself known, I left with her when I came hither to acquaint

quaint you with the happy event.
 —The other — My tongue faltered—a character of unutterable sensibility, marked on the expressive face of that *other*, forcibly struck me, and I was obliged to draw my eye from his attentive penetrating countenance before I could go one word further. The *other*, continued I, who has been more than a father to my *Olivia*, who, next to Heaven, is the nearest, dearest object of her soul's affection; that *other* she has not yet seen, the Count *de Poland* can only bring him to her presence.—
 Great and good God! he exclaimed, his arms extended towards me; I rushed into them;

the parent of your lovely *de Poland* must be the parent of *Castledown*; my tears fell in sympathy with his, whilst he pressed me to his heart in an agony of joy almost too great for utterance.—Happy, happy child, cried he, how glorious the situation in which thou art restored to me; compleat, my dear son, the felicity you have opened to my view, conduct me to my *soul's* darling.—Sir William and Lady Edgerton, Lord and Lady Morpeth, clung about him; no sound but of congratulation was to be distinguished; he distributed among them his *blessings*, his *thanks*, his *praises*, his *embraces*; they had all been instrumental

strumental to the preservation of his angel, and the fervent tribute of gratitude he paid them was proportioned to the exquisite sense in which he felt her obligations.—My carriage was by this time arrived; both were standing at the door; but we so contrived our matters as to crowd ourselves into Lord Morpeth's coach, without a thought of incommoding each other; it was first drawn up, and there was not *one* amongst us *all* who would be left behind for an instant to take a more convenient situation.—Is not this eagerness to run after happiness visible on every occasion in which the soul is interested?—*Sluggish* creeping
beings,

beings, without passions, without animation, would stalk on their sleepy pace, though *happiness* approached *even* in their view. In my calmer moments I can turn moralist; but when we drove up South-Audley-street, I was never less a philosopher. As we got *in*, so we got *out* of the carriage; the step let down, idle compliments did not hold us back, or ceremony impede our passage. We proceeded, but with less rapidity to the drawing-room.—Stop here, Seaton, you go no further, it would be presumptuous for a mortal to depicture the seraphic interview; it was the interview of *superior* beings; *angels* only should have assisted at it.

CON-

CONTINUATION.

My moments since this blessed evening have been all white, not *one* streaked with regret, or marked with discontent. What will become of you and the rest of mankind?—In what gloom are you all left to spuddle out your way through the road of life?—Joy, Love, Peace, and Felicity, which, led by Fortune, have hitherto illumined the world, are no longer visible to the world; they have altered their course; they are fled hither; we engross them *all*; you must never expect to see them dance out of *our* circle, but you are invited, warmly invited,

invited, to come to *their home*, and partake with *us* their influence.— I have not entered my own house this fortnight; prithee, Sir James, take it off my hands; I send the deeds by Colonel M——; your acceptance I make the *test* of your friendship; when you are settled in it, I shall again visit it with pleasure; you know the *narrow*, almost *sacrilegious* idea which possessed me when I made the purchase.—If you should follow the example I shall soon set you, and find the house inconvenient for a family, you may hand it over from bachelor to bachelor, till, like themselves, it moulders into dust without leaving a *trace* by which

which posterity can discover it has ever been erected. I am now an inmate of Lord Morpeth's family, and a house is fitting up in St. James's-square for the reception of its divine mistress.—The Duke and Count continue with Sir William Edgerton during my *novitiate*; but as soon as I have taken the *vows*, they are to be my guests till the beginning of summer, when I have promised to attend them with my beloved wife to their own country.—Our time will be divided between the two kingdoms, as long as these inestimable relations of my *de Poland* are continued to our ardent wishes.

We

We held a cabinet council the morning after the *great* discovery, when it was agreed, that her first appearance as their niece must be at court, preparative to our marriage; and as my wife, she will have the *same* ceremony to go through again.—*My wife!* Heavens! what will be the exultation of my heart? How will it throb with pleasure under the weight of my transports! How shall I glory in the envy her charms will inevitably draw upon me!—Never did the same passion express itself so exquisitely, yet so differently, as in the minds of those generous brothers. Joy has a similar effect to *wine* on the *Duke de Oboyne*;
he

he hugs one, he kisses the hand of another; he is here, there; you see him in every corner of the house; he springs like a boy at leap-frog; he varies his attitude faster than your eye can follow him; he talks incessantly, but the most interesting subject cannot for three seconds fix his attention; he laughs till he cries;—we laugh with him, or should become quite unacquainted with the sound of our own voices; he has a fund of humour, and it is no blemish on the understanding to pay it this tribute; a *cynic* would find himself compelled to join in the mirth he raises.—The Count *de Poland*, with more of sensibility in

his composition than I have ever met with in *any* human creature, is equally under the dominion of joy; but joy does not intoxicate him to act with extravagance; his heart might be called a pure crucible; joy comes from thence refined by reason, mellowed by piety; it mixes in all his words, in his looks, in his actions; there is nothing boisterous in its expression, yet its force is not the *less* distinguishable; the Count *de Poland's* joy is rather to be *seen* than *heard*.—When he thanks Mrs. Osmond, Lady Edgerton, and the Countess, for having been the friends of his *adopted* child, you then behold it tempered by a reflection

reflection of what that darling child suffered before she found an asylum in their protection—when he folds me in his arms, when he tells me his *de Poland* shall be mine, when he flatters me I have *deserved* her love, and blesses *me* in the same breath with which he blesses *her*, then his joy must be visible to any other eye, from mine it is concealed; I am blinded by the glare of my own transports; but when he gazes on the darling of his *soul*, when he calls on the spirit of her mother to witness his felicity, it is *then* that his joy blazes with a brightness almost radiant.

CONTINUATION.

Half the hours which are thought

Y 2 necessary

necessary by the drowsy sons of Stupidity for the purpose of repose are enough for me; the other half, I steal from sleep to dedicate to you and recollection. —I shall never more be a friend to the state of forgetfulness; it is for the wretch whose waking reflections are tinged with sorrow, it is for him to court this transient relief of nature; for a man to doze over the partial distribution in his favour would be profanation most intolerable. —I never feel an alloy to my happiness but when I brood over the train of misfortunes by which the Count *de Poland* has been pursued. —Five years the venerable body of that best of men was
loaded

loaded with irons by accursed Pagans, whose hearts were harder than the chains in which they bound him;—he will carry the marks of their barbarity to his grave; and whilst their infernal whips entered his flesh, *famine* opened its hungry jaws to devour him.—Forced to labour with brutes, unrefreshed by human society, he languished out his miserable captivity. Not for the universe would I have my gentle *de Poland* acquainted with his unprecedented sufferings; to her he has accounted for his long absence by causes *more* supportable. His escape from slavery was miraculous.—Nothing but a miracle

could have restored him to us;—take here a short sketch of this singular event.—One sultry afternoon, as the Count was employed in dragging a vast weight, to which three other unhappy slaves were also harnessed, he fainted in putting his strength to its full exertion.—What happened after he dropped upon the earth, he does not remember; but imagines, from the wounds with which he was covered, that the overseer, believing him dead, had confirmed his opinion by the cuts and slashes with which he had mangled his body, and had left him behind as useless lumber, throwing the supposed corpse into a shallow pit,
near

near the place where our dear Count fell down. Day was ebbing fast when he first began to feel himself alive, and he resigned himself to his fate with a calmness, a magnanimity, which never deserts him in the most trying situations.—The groans he uttered from the extreme agony of his wounds, drew towards him two men who were crossing a path near the place where he lay expiring.—These men were habited as *infidels*, but their hearts were not insensible to compassion; they jumped into the pit to examine the miserable creature whose lamentations excited their pity, and lifting him out, they laid him gently

gently on the grass. In performing this charitable office, one of them looking narrowly at the Count's features, cried out to his comrade in the French tongue, that it was their noble commander the Count *de Poland*!—What a comfortable sound;—the Count was not able to speak, but crossed himself several times to shew them they were not mistaken, and by his motions implored their assistance.—These renegades were taken prisoners when he lost his liberty, and had gained credit in the country by embracing Mahometism.

The fondest parent was never
more adored by his children, than
 the

the Count *de Poland* by all those who fought under his command ; his humanity, his generosity, his affability, gained him the highest reverence ; there was not a man but would cheerfully have given up his own life in defence of the Count.

—No wonder then that in meeting these renegades he met with his preservers ; they had retained their love and veneration for their great, their good Captain, even after they had yielded up a *more* superior duty.

—In their desertion from religious principle, *much* is to be set down to the score of personal security, much *more* to the account of *ignorance* ; what remains of *actual* crime, I have no doubt their honest

nest attachment to the Count will balance in the sight of Heaven—they threw themselves on their knees before him; they washed with their *rude* tears the gashes *cruelty* had imprinted on his emaciated body; their tears were not a *common* atonement; they were not *used* to flow, perhaps they were the first tribute their rugged hearts had ever paid to tenderness.—I do not mean to give you the Count's adventures at large; here ends my heart-rending recital.

I have presented my *de Poland* and her uncle's to my mother; her ideas are not so far ascended
in

in their flight to Heaven, but that she can look down with extasy on the difference between *Olivia*, whom no body *owned*, and the *heirefs* of a splendid family, deified by her relations.

The extreme Lady Castledown has lately fallen into, has given me a great deal of occasional anxiety. — I have had some conversations with her chaplain on the subject; he regards me as his future *patron*, is disposed to oblige me, and does not want understanding. — I have all the reason in the world to hope that *my* arguments, supported by the inclination of this reverend dictator, will in *time* re-duce

duce my mother's excess of piety to the medium of reason. I would extract the dross of ostentation from the humble purity of religion—I would not have Lady Castledown again *too* much in love with the world; I only wish her to think and speak of its innocent enjoyments with less austerity.

Having brought down my interesting narrative to this period; for the present, I have done with writing.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXXIV.

LADY EDGERTON TO MADAME TOURVILLE.

Bond-Street.

I Have *many* inducements to comply with the request you made me at parting; that of transmitting Sir William's thanks and my own to our *Parisian* friends, is by no means the smallest. Many are the acknowledgments we send you, but they cannot be numbered with the civilities we have received from *Monsieur* and *Madame Tourville*.

The Duke *de Oboyne* and the Count *de Poland* have recovered
 VOL. IV. Z that

that amiable niece, in pursuit of whom they accompanied us to Britain; they have found her on the very point of bestowing her hand on *your* favourite, who was distinguished at *Montpelier* by the appellation of the handsome Englishman.—Had the uncles of *Mademoiselle de Poland* looked through the world for a husband deserving of her, their choice must have fallen on *Lord Castledown*.—His disinterested passion, before he knew of any advantages she possessed independent of nature and education, *marks* him of all men the *most* deserving of her. I told *Mademoiselle* this morning I was going to write to you; I asked if she

she had any commands? — Oh, Lady Edgerton! replied the sweet grateful creature, a tear falling on her fair cheek, tell your amiable friend, tell my dear benevolent *Madame Tourville*, that I shall never forget to date the æra of my happiness from *her* appearance at the *humble* cottage in which I was *once* sheltered. — I guess your surprise by what my *own* has been on finding the *Olivia*, who, thro' *your* recommendation, I sent over to my mother, was *niece* to the Duke *de Oboyne* and the Count *de Poland*. — When she attends her uncles to France, she will let you into the particulars; they are much *too* long for a letter, or I

Z 2 would

would not leave your curiosity ungratified.—I have another message from *Mademoiselle de Poland*. The poor cottagers who afforded her a comfortable shelter in the hour of her distress, are the objects of her kind consideration; it is her request that you present to them the inclosed draft on the *Count's* banker, and to assure those honest, worthy people, this is not the *last* mark they are to receive of her remembrance.—My father and mother, who arrived in London two days after us, have given a third of their hearts to *Mademoiselle de Poland*, yet *Lady Morpeth* and myself do not find we are impoverished by her sharing them
with

with us.——Except the interview between her and our dear Count, which it *is* not in language to describe, I have never seen any thing *more* affecting than her interview with my mother; she threw herself at her feet; there was so much energy, so much eloquence in her expressions, her attitude so strikingly graceful, that it is impossible to determine whether the sight, untired with gazing, or the ear with earing, was most highly gratified.——The Duke thanked my mother with a lively polite gallantry; but the *Count's* acknowledgments were *penetrating*. There was not a dry eye in our circle; my dear good mother was

overwhelmed; her exquisite feelings of pleasure nearly bordered on distress.—The Count has presented her with a superb set of dressing plate—to Lady Morpeth a watch and chain, set with diamonds—I am ashamed to tell you, *Madame*, that, by the same generosity, I am possessed of a necklace and ear-rings, which my husband's fortune will *scarcely* intitle me to wear with propriety.—We are all infinitely pained to accept *such* extravagant proofs of the Count's favour, but our acceptance was unavoidable.—You will find yourself on his return to France under the same necessity; —by all your address you will not
be

be able to withstand his *mode* of forcing on you what he will call a *memento* of his *de Poland's* merit, which had the power of raising her *friends* in defiance of *Fortune's* persecution.—I am called away—Lady Morpeth is taken ill.

T hree in theMorning.

I have left Lord Morpeth the *most* transported of men—I thank God, my dear sister is in safety, and two hours ago she made him the father of a fine boy;—the little brat has occasioned a deal of trouble to his *poor* mother, which I hope he will repay her for in future.—I am come home fatigued to death; the packet sets off

off to-morrow, which makes me take up my pen to signify, in the sincerity of my heart, that neither time or absence can ever abate my perfect regard and esteem for my dear *Madame Tourville*.

L E T T E R. XXXV.

LADY ANN FOSTESS TO LADY HASSARD.

Cavendish-Square.

THE deuce take Lady A——'s importunities—I should only have passed through London in my way to —— if it had not been for her—she was going to town Saturday, I must stay till *then*—it would

would be the *greatest* cruelty in the world to let her travel alone.

—Well, out of my abundant good-nature, I complied.—What had I to do with good-nature?

—I hate good-nature, it draws one into *more* scrapes than enough.

—Sunday too she must drag me to court—it is horrid impertinent in people to press one to do the thing which is contrary to our inclinations, but this imperious woman makes all who venture near her ridiculous as herself; I could weep over the inexcusable weakness of my nature.

The drawing-room was fuller than I ever remember to have
seen

seen it, except of a birth-day—so *many* spectators of my mortification, it is insupportable!—I took my place in the circle next Lord Hillman, the *daily gazette* of our fashionable parties, and I read *intelligence extraordinary* in capital characters on the front of this *calf's-skin* folio.—I asked him of what nature?—He replied to my question by another.—How long has your Ladyship been out of the world?—Long enough, my Lord, to have a thousand *strange* events happen in my absence, and I apply to your Lordship for information.—Then, perhaps, you have not heard of the remarkable presentation which is this day expected?

pected?—Not a word of the matter.—I am happy that the honour of acquainting your Ladyship devolves on me.—The entrance of their Majesties for a moment interrupted him, but in the next, he returned to his subject—Heaven knows of how *little* importance I thought it, and with how *little* impatience I waited its continuation; but when he said the Lady to be presented was niece to the Duke *de Oboyne* and the Count *de Poland*, I began to feel rather *more* interested. I have often heard my mother speak of this family; by a ridiculous intermarriage, they stood in that sort of relationship to her which the vulgar distinguish by

by the appellation of *first cousins*.
 —I am the *worst* genealogist in the world; all I can tell you is this, that a sister of this very Duke de Oboyne, being ill used in France, eloped from her family, and put herself under the protection of my grandmother, married an indigent man of quality, was reduced to beggary, and was consequently thrown off by all her English connections.—On reading another page in the *foolish folio*, I found out that a Phœnix had sprung from the ashes of this reduced relation, and that she was the very person to be presented; and *more*, that *Mademoiselle de Poland* was on the eve of becoming
Countess

Countess of Castledown.—I thought I should have sunk—ill mannered wretch!—What detestable information did he give me!—I asked him in a tone of doubt, mingled with scorn, if I might *depend* on his intelligence? or if, like the *Brussels Gazette*, I was to expect a contradiction in the next paragraph.—He assured me upon *his honour* it was true, and, by way of sweetening the pill, added, that the Duke and Count were to make the present fortune of their niece a hundred thousand pounds.—As he fluttered out this last mighty pleasant anecdote, the eyes of the whole circle were directed towards the entrance, and my

head mechanically turned the same way. Lord *Hillman* touched my sleeve, that is *Mademoiselle de Poland*, whispered the *idiot*—what a divine creature! is she not beautiful, Lady Ann?—I made the *fool* no answer, my attention was all engaged; I felt petrified with astonishment; a moment after, my rage boiled over—it was lucky I did not burst into tears of vexation when the features of this dazzling beauty, this hundred thousand pounder, and what is a million times worse, this destined wife of my adored *Castledown*, recalled to my memory the woman whose humble situation once prompted me to insult her.—Yes,

head . . . A . . . VI. Lady

Lady *Haffard*!—it is true, it is fact, that *Olivia*, the *bone-picker* of Lady *Morpeth*, is the *prodigious* fine Lady I saw presented under the *most* flattering distinctions, and who attracted *more* admiration in one minute than has fallen to my lot in my whole course of study to engage it;—this, even *this*, I could have borne without feeling the absolute tortures of madness, had not this treacherous heart of mine told me truths insufferable. —Why does it force me to confess, that this *Mademoiselle* is more beautiful than all the beauties my eyes were ever vexed with?—She is tall enough to be aukward, if every avenue to aukwardness

A a 2

were

were not guarded by the Graces,—quite a *Chesterfielder*! Graces from top to toe; you see them in the management of her hoop, or the opening of her fan, her arms are rounded by them, and the motion of her hands receive from them the signal of command; they are seen in the turn of her neck, they are displayed on her bosom, they sport on her forehead, and hang in long dark eye-lashes to shade a complexion, to the resplendency of which I am shocked to bear testimony.—Her dress was afforted to the interesting elegance of her figure; her gown was light blue satin, so exactly matched to the colour of her eyes, that I am apt to

to suppose she carried them into Spitalfields as a pattern—no diamonds, no gold, no silver, all plain to a degree of plainness, the trimmings entirely composed of pearls, girl! ear-rings, necklace, and buckles, also pearls; her head had no other ornament than a large pearl sprig, formed to represent lilies of the valley;—in her bosom, natural rose-buds, with sprigs of myrtle in blossom, compleated her drapery, and *more* than compleated my defeat.

The Duke and Count appeared rather in the light of *idolators* than *uncles*, particularly the *latter*;—why did they not keep her in

A a 3 France?

France? The Pope might have granted a dispensation—Oh! that she had been the wife of either, or mistress to his Holiness, sooner than come hither to set the whole mass of my blood in a ferment, and raise the inflammation of despair so ragingly high, that the *most* fatal of all disorders is unavoidable—yes, I shall die—absolutely die of a mortification.—*Castledown* was odiously ridiculous whilst his *Mademoiselle* was presenting; I expected to have seen his heart leap out of his bosom; and fly across the room to prostrate itself at the feet of its idol. It is strange, people of distinction, whose very cradles have been rocked in fashionable

fashionable life, should not have command enough over their passions to behave with indifference in *publick*;—the fondness with which he followed the enchantress with his *vile* love-fraught glances, was positively *quite* unbred and downright provoking.—Now would I give any thing but my vivacity to know how Lady *Morpeth* takes all this mighty pretty affair.—I swear she still doats on *Castle-down*; and what the *gipsy* saw pass between them at *Cornelly's*, Lady *Ann Fosse's* ceases not to remember.—I will submit to give my hand and fortune to *Fame*—by the bye, *Lord Robert* is more and more importunate.—Well, I say I will
even

even *marry* him, if I can devise no means *less* intolerable to make him assist me in propagating to the world, that Lady *Morpeth's* conversation with her lover at the masquerade was not on *indifferent* subjects.

I can't put these *vile* French folks out of my head ; their odious *Mademoiselle*, I understand, was to have been Countess of *Castledown* last Thursday, but the fair idiot chose to put it off till her dear *Lady Morpeth* was enough recovered to grace the ceremony ; —some people say she is no fool ; but this, however, is *no* proof of her wisdom ; —a rival who has gone
such

such lengths was much more to be avoided than courted—but what have I to do with them? Let them, if they will, marr their own happiness; it would be a noble revenge for the pangs I have suffered;—if they do not torment each other, I am woefully afraid they are so far out of Fortune's reach, that no foreign plagues will be able to affect their felicity. I am neither in humour with myself or any body about me; but my dear Lady *Hassard*, I am your's in spite of peevishness, disappointment, and all the horrors of despair.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

LORD CASTLEDOWN TO SIR JAMES SEATON.

St. James's-Square.

LOOK up, my friend, and behold me placed on the tip-top of Fortune's eminence.—My lovely wife, by whose hand I reached this summit, stands smiling by my side.—The *sun* of prosperity glows upon us; ten thousand *loves* are enlisted in our service; the roses of *peace* spring up under our feet.—Exalted so much above the rest of mankind, my head grows giddy with surveying the vast expanse of happiness that surrounds me.

I am

I am not in an humour for long letters; it is enough, if I can tell you, that I am the husband of my adored *de Poland*, and that my transports have not reduced me to an absolute state of insanity.

F I N I S.